Comparative Literature

Volume I WINTER 1949 Number 1

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PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, EUGENE, OREGON

With the Cooperation of the Comparative Literature Section of the Modern Language Association of America

Issued quarterly. Entry as second-class matter, at the post office at Eugene, Oregon, pending.

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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

VOL. I WINTER 1949 NUMBER 1

THE CONCEPT OF "ROMANTICISM" IN LITERARY HISTORY

RENÉ WELLEK

I. The Term "Romantic" and Its Derivatives

THE terms "romanticism" and "romantic" have been under attack for a long time. In a well-known paper, "On the Discriminations of Romanticisms," Arthur O. Lovejoy has argued impressively that "the word 'romantic' has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing. It has ceased to perform the function of a verbal sign." Lovejoy proposed to remedy this "scandal of literary history and criticism" by showing that "the 'Romanticism' of one country may have little in common with that of another, that there is, in fact, a plurality of Romanticisms, of possibly quite distinct thought-complexes." He grants that "there may be some common denominator to them all; but if so, it has never been clearly exhibited."[1] Moreover, according to Lovejoy, "the romantic ideas were in large part heterogeneous, logically independent, and sometimes essentially antithetic to one another in their implications."[2]

As far as I know, this challenge has never been taken up by those who still consider the terms useful and will continue to speak of a unified European romantic movement. While Lovejoy makes reservations and some concessions to the older view, the impression seems widespread

[1] *PMLA* XXIX (1924), 229-253. Reprinted in *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore, 1948), pp. 228-253, especially pp. 232, 234, 235, 236.

[2] "The Meaning of Romanticism for the Historian of Ideas," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, II (1941), 261.

today, especially among American scholars, that his thesis has been established securely. I propose to show that there is no basis for this extreme nominalism, that the major romantic movements form a unity of theories, philosophies, and style, and that these, in turn, form a coherent group of ideas each of which implicates the other.

I have tried elsewhere to make a theoretical defense of the use and function of period terms.[3] I concluded that one must conceive of them, not as arbitrary linguistic labels nor as metaphysical entities, but as names for systems of norms which dominate literature at a specific time of the historical process. The term "norms" is a convenient term for conventions, themes, philosophies, styles, and the like, while the word "domination" means the prevalence of one set of norms compared with the prevalence of another set in the past. The term "domination" must not be conceived of statistically: it is entirely possible to envisage a situation in which older norms still prevailed numerically while the new conventions were created or used by writers of greatest artistic importance. It thus seems to me impossible to avoid the critical problem of evaluation in literary history. The literary theories, terms, and slogans of a time need not have prescriptive force for the modern literary historian. We are justified in speaking of "Renaissance" and "Baroque," though both of these terms were introduced centuries after the events to which they refer. Still, the history of literary criticism, its terms and slogans affords important clues to the modern historian, since it shows the degree of self-consciousness of the artists themselves and may have profoundly influenced the practice of writing. But this is a question which has to be decided case by case, since there have been ages of low self-consciousness and ages in which theoretical awareness lagged far behind practice or even conflicted with it.

In the case of romanticism the question of the terminology, its spread and establishment, is especially complicated because it is contemporary or nearly contemporary with the phenomena described. The adoption of the terms points to an awareness of certain changes. But this awareness may have existed without these terms, or these terms may have been introduced before the actual changes took place, merely as a program, as the expression of a wish, an incitement to change. The situation differs in different countries; but this is, of course, in itself no argument that the phenomena to which the terms refer showed substantial differences.

The semantic history of the term "romantic" has been very fully studied in its early stages in France, England, and Germany, and for the

[3] Cf. "Periods and Movements in Literary History," *English Institute Annual 1940* (New York, 1941), pp. 73-93, and *Theory of Literature*, with Austin Warren (New York, 1949), especially pp. 274ff.

later stages in Germany.[4] But, unfortunately, little attention has been paid to it in other countries and, even where materials are abundant, it is still difficult to ascertain when, for the first time, a work of literature and which works of literature were designated as "romantic," when the contrast of "classical-romantic" was introduced, when a contemporary writer referred to himself first as a "romanticist," when the term "romanticism" was first adopted in a country, etc. Some attempt, however imperfect in detail, can be made to straighten out this history on an international scale and to answer some of these questions.

We are not concerned here with the early history of "romantic" which shows an expansion of its use from "romance-like," "extravagant," "absurd," etc., to "picturesque." If we limit ourselves to the history of the term as used in criticism and literary history, there is little difficulty about its main outlines. The term "romantic poetry" was used first of Ariosto and Tasso and the mediæval romances from which their themes and "machinery" were derived. It occurs in this sense in France in 1669, in England in 1674,[5] and certainly Thomas Warton understood it to mean this when he wrote his introductory dissertation to his *History of English Poetry* (1774), "The Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe." In Warton's writings and those of several of his contemporaries a contrast is implied between this "romantic" literature, both mediæval and Renaissance, and the whole tradition of literary art as it came down from classical antiquity. The composition and "machinery" of Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser are defended against the charges of neoclassical criticism with arguments which derive from the Renaissance defenders of Ariosto (Patrizzi, Cinthio) and which had been repeated by such good neoclassicists as Jean Chapelain.[6] An attempt is made to justify a special taste for such "romantic" fiction and its noncompliance with classical standards and rules, even though these are not challenged for

[4] Fernand Baldensperger, " 'Romantique'—ses analogues et équivalents," *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XIV (1937), 13-105, is the fullest list. Unfortunately there is no interpretation and it goes only to 1810. Richard Ullmann and Helene Gotthard, *Geschichte des Begriffs "Romantisch" in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1927), *Germanische Studien*, L, is most valuable and tells the story to the 1830s. But the arrangement is confusing and confused. Logan P. Smith, *Four Words, Romantic, Originality, Creative, Genius* (Society for Pure English Tract no. 17, London, 1924), reprinted in *Words and Idioms* (Boston, 1925), is still the only piece on English developments and is for this purpose valuable; the comments on the further story in Germany are injudicious.

[5] Jean Chapelain speaks of "l'épique romanesque, genre de poésie sans art" in 1667. In 1669 he contrasts "poésie romanesque" and "poésie héroïque." René Rapin refers to "poésie romanesque du Pulci, du Boiardo, et de l'Arioste" in 1673. Thomas Rymer translates this as "Romantick Poetry of Pulci, Bojardo, and Ariosto" a year later. Baldensperger, *loc. cit.*, pp. 22, 24, 26.

[6] For the antecedents of Warton's and Hurd's arguments, see Odell Shepard's review of Clarissa Rinaker's *Thomas Warton* in *JEGP* XVI (1917), 153, and Victor M. Hamm, "A Seventeenth Century Source for Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*," *PMLA*, LII (1937), 820.

other genres. The dichotomy implied has obvious analogues in other contrasts common in the eighteenth century: between the ancients and moderns, between artificial and popular poetry, the "natural" poetry of Shakespeare unconfined by rules and French classical tragedy. A definite juxtaposition of "Gothic" and "classical" occurs in Hurd and Warton. Hurd speaks of Tasso as "trimming between the Gothic and the Classic," and of the *Faerie Queene* as a "Gothic, not a classical poem." Warton calls Dante's *Divine Comedy* a "wonderful compound of classical and romantic fancy."[7] Here the two famous words meet, possibly for the first time, but Warton probably meant little more than that Dante used both classical mythology and chivalric *motifs*.

This use of the term "romantic" penetrated into Germany. In 1766, Gerstenberg reviewed Warton's *Observations on the Fairy Queen*, considering them far too neoclassical, and Herder used the learning, information, and terminology of Warton and his English contemporaries. He distinguished sometimes between the "romantic" (chivalric) and the "Gothic" (Nordic) taste, but mostly the words "Gothic" and "romantic" were used by him interchangeably. He could say that from the mixture of the Christian religion and chivalry "wird der italienische, geistliche, fromme, romantische Geschmack geboren."[8] This usage then penetrated into the first handbooks of general history of literature: into Eichhorn's *Literärgeschichte* (1799) and into the first volumes, devoted to Italian and Spanish literature, of Friedrich Bouterwek's monumental *Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit seit dem Ende des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts* (1801-05). There the term "romantisch" is used in all combinations: style, manners, characters, poetry are called "romantisch." Sometimes Bouterwek uses the term "altromantisch" to refer to the Middle Ages, and "neuromantisch" to refer to what we would call the Renaissance. This usage is substantially identical with Warton's except that its realm has been expanded more and more: not only mediæval literature and Ariosto and Tasso but also Shakespeare, Cervantes and Calderón are called "romantic." It simply means all poetry written in a tradition differing from that descended from classical antiquity. This broad historical conception was later combined with a new meaning: the typological, which is based on an elaboration of the contrast between "classical" and "romantic" and is due to the Schlegels. Goethe, in a conversation with Eckermann in 1830, said that Schiller invented the distinction "naive and sentimental" and that the Schlegels merely renamed it "classical and romantic."[9] At that time Goethe had

[7] Examples from L. P. Smith, cited in note 4. Warton's *History of English Poetry*, III (London, 1781), 241, on Dante.

[8] Herder's *Werke*, ed. Berhard Suphan, XXXII, 29. Other examples in Ullmann-Gotthard.

[9] Goethe to Eckermann, March 21, 1830.

become very antagonistic to recent literary developments in France and Germany and had even formulated the contrast: "Klassich ist das Gesunde, romantisch das Kranke."[10] He disliked the Schlegels for personal and ideological reasons. But his pronouncement is certainly not accurate history. Clearly Schiller's *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* was a statement of a typology of styles which did influence Friedrich Schlegel's turn towards modernism from his earlier Hellenism.[11] But Schiller's contrast is not identical with that of the Schlegels, as is obvious from the mere fact that Shakespeare is "naiv" in Schiller and "romantische" in Schlegel.

Much attention has, comprehensibly, been paid to the exact usage of these terms by the Schlegels.[12] But, if we look at the history of the word "romantic" from a wide European perspective, many of these uses must be considered purely idiosyncratic, since they had no influence on the further history of the term and did not even determine the most influential statement formulated by August Wilhelm Schlegel himself in the *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1809-11), which has rightly been called the "Message of German Romanticism to Europe."[13] The terms "Romantik" and "Romantiker" as nouns were apparently inventions of Novalis, in 1798-99. But, with Novalis, "Romantiker" is a writer of romances and fairy tales of his own peculiar type, "Romantik" is a synonym of "Romankunst" in this sense.[14] Also the famous fragment, No. 116, of the *Athenaeum* (1798) by Friedrich Schlegel, which defines "romantic poetry" as "progressive Universalpoesie" connects it with the idea of such a romantic novel. In the later "Gespräch über die Poesie" (1800), however, the term assumed again its concrete historical meaning: Shakespeare is characterized as laying the foundation of romantic drama and the romantic is found also in Cervantes, in Italian poetry, "in the age of chivalry, love and fairy tales, whence the thing and the word are derived." Friedrich Schlegel, at this time, does not consider his own age romantic, since he singles out the novels of Jean Paul as the "only romantic product of an unromantic age." He uses the term also

[10] Goethe, *Werke*, Weimarer Ausgabe, I, 42 (2), p. 246.

[11] The best analysis is in A. O. Lovejoy, "Schiller and the Genesis of German Romanticism," *MLN*, XXXV (1920), 1-10, 136-146; reprinted in *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore, 1948), pp. 207-227.

[12] See A. O. Lovejoy, "The Meaning of 'Romanticism' in Early German Romanticism," *MLN*, XXXI (1916), 385-396 and XXXII (1917), 65-77; reprinted, *op. cit.* pp. 183-206.

[13] Josef Körner, *Die Botschaft der deutschen Romantik an Europa* (Augsburg, 1929), a sketch of the reception of A. W. Schlegel's lectures outside of Germany.

[14] Cf. "Der Romantiker studiert das Leben wie der Maler, Musiker und Mechaniker Farben, Ton und Kraft." *Schriften*, ed. Samuel-Kluckhohn, III, 263; "Romantik," III, 74-75, 88. These passages date from 1798-99, but only the first saw the light in the 1802 edition of Novalis' *Schriften*, ed. F. Schlegel and L. Tieck, II, 311.

quite vaguely and extravagantly as an element of all poetry and claims that all poetry must be romantic.[15]

But the descriptions and pronouncements which were influential, both in Germany and abroad, were those of the older brother, August Wilhelm Schlegel. In the lectures on aesthetics, given at Jena in 1798, the contrast of classical and romantic is not yet drawn explicitly. But it is implied in the lengthy discussion of modern genres, which include the romantic novel culminating in the "perfect masterwork of higher romantic art," *Don Quixote*, the romantic drama of Shakespeare, Calderón, and Goethe, and the romantic folk poetry of the Spanish romances and Scottish ballads.[16]

In the Berlin lectures, given from 1801 to 1804, though not published until 1884,[17] Schlegel formulated the contrast, classical and romantic, as that between the poetry of antiquity and modern poetry, associating romantic with the progressive and Christian. He sketched a history of romantic literature which starts with a discussion of the mythology of the Middle Ages and closes with a review of the Italian poetry of what we would today call the Renaissance. Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio are described as the founders of modern romantic literature, though Schlegel, of course, knew that they admired antiquity. But he argued that their form and expression were totally unclassical. They did not dream of preserving the forms of antiquity in structure and composition. "Romantic" includes the German heroic poems such as the *Nibelungen*, the cycle of Arthur, the Charlemagne romances, and Spanish literature from *Cid* to *Don Quixote*. The lectures were well attended and from them these conceptions penetrated into print in the writings of other men than the Schlegels. Schlegel printed parts in his *Spanisches Theater* (1803). In the unpublished lectures of Schelling on *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802-03),[18] in Jean Paul's *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (1804), and in Friedrich Ast's *System der Kunstlehre* (1805)[19] we find the contrast elaborated. But the most important formulation was in the *Lectures* of A. W. Schlegel delivered at Vienna in 1808-09 and published in 1809-11. There romantic-classical is associated with the antithesis of organic-mechanical and plastic-picturesque. There clearly the literature

[15] Reprinted in Friedrich Schlegel's *Jugendschriften*, ed. J. Minor, II, 220-221, 365, 372.

[16] *Vorlesungen über philosophische Kunstlehre* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 214, 217, 221.

[17] *Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst*, 3 vols., ed. J. Minor, (Heilbronn, 1884); see especially I, 22.

[18] Printed only in *Sämmtliche Werke*, Erste Abtheilung, vol. V (Stuttgart, 1859). Schelling had read the MS of Schlegel's Berlin lectures.

[19] Ast had attended A. W. Schlegel's lectures at Jena in 1798. His very imperfect transcript was published as *Vorlesungen über philosophische Kunstlehre*, ed. A. Wünsche (Leipzig, 1911).

of antiquity and that of neoclassicism (mainly French) is contrasted with the romantic drama of Shakespeare and Calderón, the poetry of perfection with the poetry of infinite desire.

It is easy to see how this typological and historical usage could pass into the designation of the contemporary movement, since the Schlegels were obviously strongly anticlassicist at that time and were appealing to the ancestry and models of the literature they had designated as romantic. But the process was surprisingly slow and hesitant. Jean Paul speaks of himself as "Biograph von Romantikern" in 1803, but seems only to refer to figures in his novels. In 1804 he refers to "Tieck und andere Romantiker," meaning writers of fairy tales. But the designation of contemporary literature as romantic was apparently due only to the enemies of the Heidelberg group which today we are accustomed to call the Second Romantic School. J. H. Voss attacked them for their reactionary Catholic views in 1808 and published a parodistic *Klingelklingelalmanach* with the subtitle: *Ein Taschenbuch für vollendete Romantiker und angehende Mystiker*. The *Zeitschrift für Einsiedler*, the organ of Arnim and Brentano, adopted the term with alacrity. In the *Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Kunst* (1808), the merit of "our Romantiker" seems to be praised for the first time. The first historical account of "die neue literarische Partei der sogenannten Romantiker" can be found only in the eleventh volume (1819) of Bouterwek's monumental *Geschichte*, where the Jena group and Brentano are discussed together. Heine's much later *Romantische Schule* (1833) included Fouqué, Uhland, Werner, and E. T. A. Hoffmann. Rudolf Haym's standard work, *Die romantische Schule* (1870) is limited to the first Jena group: the Schlegels, Novalis, and Tieck.[20] Thus, in German literary history, the original broad historical meaning of the term has been abandoned and "Romantik" is used for a group of writers who did not call themselves "Romantiker."

The broad meaning of the term as used by August Wilhelm Schlegel, however, spread abroad from Germany in all directions. The northern countries seem to have been the first to adopt the terms: Jens Baggesen, as early as 1804, wrote (or began to write) a parody of *Faust* in German, of which the subtitle runs *Die romantische Welt oder Romanien im Tollhaus*.[21] Baggesen was, at least formally, the editor of the *Klingelklingelalmanach*. Adam Öhlenschläger brought conceptions of German romanticism to Denmark in the first decade of the nineteenth century. In Sweden the group around the periodical *Phosphoros* seems to have

[20] See Ullmann-Gotthard, pp. 70, etc.

[21] Apparently published only in Jens Baggesen's *Poetische Werke in deutscher Sprache*, vol. III (Leipzig, 1836). A statement on date of composition is given there.

discussed the terms first. In 1810, a translation of part of Ast's *Aesthetik* was published and was extensively reviewed in *Phosphoros* with references to Schlegel, Novalis, and Wackenroder.[22] In Holland we find the contrast beween classical poetry and romantic poetry elaborated by N. G. Van Kampen in 1823.[23]

In the Latin world, and in England as well as in America, the intermediary role of Madame de Staël was decisive. For France it can be shown, however, that she was anticipated by others, though far less effectively. Warton's usage of the term was apparently rare in France, though it occurs in Chateaubriand's *Essai sur les révolutions* (1797), a book written in England, where the word is coupled with "Gothique" and "tudesque," and spelled in the English way.[24] But with the exception of such small traces, the word is not used in a literary context until the German influence was felt directly. It occurs in a letter by Charles Villers, a French emigrant in Germany and first expounder of Kant, published in the *Magasin Encyclopédique* in 1810. Dante and Shakespeare are spoken of as "sustaining *La Romantique*" and the new spiritual sect in Germany is praised because it favors *"La Romantique."*[25] Villers' article was hardly noticed: a translation of Bouterwek's *Geschichte der spanischen Literatur* by Phillipe-Albert Stapfer, in 1812, also elicited no interest, though it was reviewed by the young Guizot. The decisive year was 1813: then Simonde de Sismondi's *De la littérature du midi de l'Europe* was published in May and June. In October Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* was finally published in London, though it had been ready for print in 1810. In December 1813, A. W. Schlegel's *Cours de littérature dramatique* appeared in a translation by Madame Necker de Saussure, a cousin of Madame de Staël. Most importantly, *De l'Allemagne* was reprinted in Paris in May 1814. All these works, it need hardly be shown, radiate from one center, Coppet, and Sismondi, Bouterwek, and Madame de Staël are, as far as the concept of "romantic" is concerned, definitely dependent on Schlegel.

There is no need to rehearse the story of A. W. Schlegel's associations with Madame de Staël. The exposition of classical-romantic in chapter XI of *De l'Allemagne*, including its parallel of classical and sculpturesque, romantic and picturesque, the contrast between Greek drama of

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[22] *Phosphorus* (Upsala, 1810), pp. 116, 172-173.

[23] "Verhandeling over de vraag: welk is het onderscheidend verschil tusschen de klassische poezy der Ouden en de dus genoemde Romantische poezy der nieuweren?" *Werken der Hollandsche Maatschappij van Fraaije Kunsten en Wetenschaffen*, VI (Leyden, 1823), 181-382.

[24] See Baldensperger, *loc. cit.*, p. 90.

[25] Reprinted in Edmond Eggli-Pierre Martino, *Le Débat romantique en France*, I (Paris, 1933), 26-30. A continuation of this excellent collection, which goes only to 1816, is much to be desired.

event and modern drama of character, the poetry of Fate versus the poetry of Providence, the poetry of perfection versus the poetry of progress, clearly derive from Schlegel. Sismondi disliked Schlegel personally and was shocked by many of his "reactionary" views. In details, he may have drawn much more from Bouterwek than from Schlegel, but his view that the Romance literatures are essentially romantic in spirit, and that French literature forms an exception among them, is definitely derived from Schlegel, as are his descriptions of the contrast between Spanish and Italian drama.[26]

These three books, Sismondi's, Madame de Staël's, and Schlegel's, were reviewed and discussed very heatedly in France. M. Edmond Eggli has collected a whole volume of almost 500 pages of these polemics, covering only the years 1813-16.[27] The reaction was fairly mild to the scholarly Sismondi, violent to the foreign Schlegel, and mixed and frequently baffled to Madame de Staël. In all of these polemics, the enemies are called *Les romantiques*, but it is not clear what recent literature is referred to except these three books. When Benjamin Constant published his novel *Adolphe* (1816), he was attacked as strengthening *"le genre romantique."* The melodrama also was called contemptuously by this name and German drama identified with it.[28]

But up to 1816 there was no Frenchman who called himself a romantic nor was the term "romantisme" known in France. Its history is still somewhat obscure: curiously enough, "Romantismus" is used as a synonym of bad rhyming and empty lyricism in a letter written by Clemens Brentano to Achim von Arnim in 1803,[29] but so far as I know this form had no future in Germany. In 1804 Senancour refers to "romantisme des sites alpestres,"[30] using it thus as a noun corresponding to the use of

[26] Best accounts of these relationships are Comtesse Jean de Pange, *Auguste-Guillaume Schlegel et Madame de Staël* (Paris, 1938), and Jean-R. de Salis, *Sismondi, 1773-1842* (Paris, 1932).

[27] See note 25.

[28] The definition of "Romantique" by E. Jouy in 1816, quoted by Eggli, *op. cit.*, p. 492, sums up the contemporary view of the history very neatly: *"Romantique*: terme de jargon sentimental, dont quelques écrivains se sont servis pour caractériser une nouvelle école de littérature sous la direction du professeur Schlegel. La première condition qu' on y exige des élèves, c'est de reconnaître que nos Molière, nos Racine, nos Voltaire, sont de petits génies empêtrés dans les règles, qui n'ont pu s'élever à la hauteur du beau idéal, dont la recherche est l'object du genre romantique. Ce mot envahisseur n'a d'abord été admis qu'à la suite et dans le sens du mot pittoresque, dont on aurait peut-être dû se contenter; mais il a passé tout à coup du domaine descriptif, qui lui était assigné, dans les espaces de l'imagination."

[29] "Es ist aber auch jetzt ein solch Gesinge und ein solcher Romantismus eingerissen, dass man sich schämt auch mit beizutragen." Reinhold Steig, *Achim von Arnim und die ihm nahe standen*, I (Stuttgart, 1894), 102. Letter, dated Frankfurt, Oct. 12, 1803. This item is not mentioned in the very full collections of Ullmann-Gotthard or by any other student of the history of the term.

[30] *Obermann*, Lettre LXXXVII. Quoted by Eggli, p. 11.

"romantic" as "picturesque." But, in literary contexts, it does not seem to occur before 1816 and then it is used vaguely and jocularly. There is a letter in the *Constitutionnel,* supposedly written by a man residing near the Swiss frontier, within sight of Madame de Staël's castle, who complains of his wife's enthusiasm for the "romantic" and tells of a poet who cultivates "le genre tudesque" and has read to them "des morceaux pleins de romantisme, les purs mystères du baiser, la sympathie primitive et l'ondoyante mélancolie des cloches."[31] Shortly afterwards, Stendhal, then at Milan, who had read Schlegel's lectures immediately after the publication of the French translation, called Schlegel in letters a "petit pédant sec" and "ridicule" but complained that, in France, they attack Schlegel and think that they have defeated "le Romantisme."[32] Stendhal seems to have been the first Frenchman who called himself a romantic: "Je suis un romantique furieux, c'est-à-dire, je suis pour Shakespeare contre Racine et pour Lord Byron, contre Boileau."[33]

But that was in 1818 and Stendhal was then voicing adherence to the Italian romantic movement. Thus Italy enters importantly into our story, since it was the first Latin country to have a romantic movement which was aware of its being romantic. There, of course, the controversy had penetrated also in the wake of Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne,* which was translated as early as 1814. H. Jay's violently antiromantic *Discours sur le genre romantique en littérature,* published in 1814, appeared immediately in an Italian translation.[34] The role of Madame de Staël's article on translations from German and English is well known. It elicited Lodovico di Breme's defense, who refers, however, to the whole dispute as a French affair, and obviously thinks of "romantic" in terms which would have been comprehensible to Herder or even Warton. He quotes Gravina's arguments in favor of the composition of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and sees that the same criteria apply to "Romantici settentrionali, Shakespeare e Schiller," in tragedy.[35] Giovanni Berchet's *Lettera semiseria di Grisostomo,* with its translations from Bürger's ballads, is usually considered the manifesto of the Italian romantic movement; but Berchet does not use the noun nor does he speak of an Italian romantic movement. Tasso is one of the poets called "ro-

[31] July 19, 1816. Reprinted in Eggli, pp. 472-473.

[32] Letters to Louis Crozet, Sept. 28, Oct. 1, and Oct. 20, 1816, in *Correspondance,* ed. Divan (Paris, 1934), IV, 371, 389, and V, 14-15. Marginalia to Schlegel in *Mélanges intimes et marginalia,* ed. Divan (Paris, 1936), I, 311-326. Most are malicious and even angry.

[33] Letter to Baron de Mereste, Apr. 14, 1818, *ibid.* p. 137.

[34] Originally in *Le Spectateur,* no. XXIV (1814), III, 145; reprinted in Eggli, *op. cit.,* pp. 243-256. In Italian in *Lo Spettatore,* no. 24, III, 145, apparently a parallel publication.

[35] "Intorno all'ingiustizia di alcuni giudizi letterari italiani" (1816), in *Polemiche,* ed. Carlo Calcaterra (Torino, 1923), pp. 36-38.

mantici," and the famous contrast between classical poetry and romantic poetry as that between the poetry of the dead and the living is suggested.[36] The peculiarly "contemporaneous," political character of the Italian romantic movement is here anticipated. In 1817 Schlegel's *Lectures* were translated by Giovanni Gherardini, but the great outburst of pamphlets—the whole battle—came only in 1818, when the term "romanticismo" is used first by antiromantic pamphleteers, Francesco Pezzi, Camillo Piciarelli, and Conte Falletti di Barolo, who wrote *Della Romanticomachia,* and there draws the distinction between "genere romantico" and "il romanticismo."[37] Berchet, in his ironical comments, professes not to understand the distinction.[38] Ermes Visconti, in his formal article on the term, uses shortly afterwards only "romantismo."[39] But "romanticismo" seems to have been well established by 1819, when D. M. Dalla used it in the title of his translation of the thirtieth chapter of Sismondi's *Literature of the South,* as *Vera Definizione del Romanticismo,* though the French original shows no trace of the term. Stendhal, who had used the term "romantisme" and continued to use it, was now temporarily converted to "romanticisme," obviously suggested by the Italian term. Stendhal wrote two small papers "Qu'est-ce que le romanticisme?" and "Du romanticisme dans les beaux arts" which, however, remained in manuscript.[40] The first paper of *Racine et Shakespeare,* published in the *Paris Monthly Review* (1882), uses "romanticisme" for the first time in French.

But, in the meantime, "romantisme" seems to have become general in France. François Mignet used it in 1822, Villemain and Lacretelle in the following year.[41] The spread and acceptance of the term was assured when Louis S. Auger, director of the French Academy, launched a *Discours sur le Romantisme,* condemning the new heresy in a solemn session of the Academy on April 24, 1824. In the second edition of *Racine et Shakespeare* (1825), Stendhal himself gave up his earlier form "romanticisme" in favor of the new "romantisme." We shall not try to re-

[36] In Giovanni Berchet, *Opere,* ed. E. Bellorini (Bari, 1912), II, 19, 20, 21.

[37] See *Discussioni e polemiche sul romanticismo* (1816-1826), ed. Egidio Bellorini (Bari, 1943), I, 252, 358-359, 363. Bellorini was unable to procure the pamphlet by Piciarelli. The first occurrence of the word is in an article by Pezzi on Byron's *Giaur* in *Gazzetta di Milano* (Jan. 1818).

[38] *Il Conciliatore,* no. 17 (Oct. 29, 1818), pp. 65-66.

[39] "Idee elementari sulla poesia romantica" in *Il Conciliatore,* no. 27 (Nov. 3, 1818), p. 105.

[40] These papers were published only in 1854 and 1922, respectively. See *Racine et Shakespeare,* ed. Divan (Paris, 1928), pp. 175, 267.

[41] *Courrier français,* Oct. 19, 1822, quoted by P. Martino, *L'Époque romantique en France* (Paris, 1944), p. 27. Mignet says that Scott "a résolu selon moi la grande question du romantisme." Lacretelle, in *Annales de la littérature et des arts,* XIII (1823), 415, calls Schlegel "le Quintilien du romantisme"; quoted in C. M. Des Granges, *Le Romantisme et la Critique* (Paris, 1907), p. 207.

count the familiar story of the romantic *"cénacles,"* the romantic periodicals of the twenties, all leading up to the Preface to *Cromwell* and the great battle of *Hernani.*[42] Clearly, just as in Italy, a broadly typological and historical term, introduced by Madame de Staël, had become the battle cry of a group of writers who found it a convenient label to express their opposition to the ideals of neoclassicism.

In Spain the terms "classical" and "romantic" occurred in newspapers as early as 1818, once with a specific reference to Schlegel. But apparently an Italian exile, Luigi Monteggia, who came to Spain in 1821, was the first to write elaborately on "Romanticismo" in *Europeo* (1823), where shortly afterward López Soler analyzed the debate between "románticos y clasicistas." The group of Spanish writers who called themselves "Románticos" was, however, victorious only around 1838 and it soon disintegrated as a coherent "school."[43]

Among Portuguese poets, Almeida Garrett seems to have been the first to refer to "nos romanticos" in his poem, *Camoëns,* written in 1823 in Le Havre during his French exile.[44]

The Slavic countries received the term in about the same time as the Romance. In Bohemia the adjective "romanticky" in connection with a poem occurs as early as 1805, the noun "romantismus" in 1819, the noun "romantika," a formation from the German, in 1820, the noun "romantik" (meaning romanticist) only in 1835.[45] But there never was a formal romantic school.

In Poland, Casimir Brodzinski wrote a dissertation concerning classicism and romanticism in 1818. Mickiewicz wrote a long preface to his *Ballady i Romanse* (1822) in which he expounded the contrast of classical and romantic, referring to Schlegel, Bouterwek, and Eberhard, the author of one of the many German aesthetics of the time. The collection contains a poem, "Romantyczonść," a ballad on the theme of *Lenore.*[46]

In Russia, Pushkin spoke of his *Prisoner from the Caucasus* as a "romantic poem" in 1821, and Prince Vyazemsky, reviewing the poem during the next war, was apparently the first to discuss the contrast

[42] The most useful account is René Bray, *Chronologie du romantisme* (Paris, 1932).

[43] E. Allison Peers, "The Term Romanticism in Spain," *Revue Hispanique,* LXXXI (1933), 411-418. Monteggia's article is reprinted in *Bulletin of Spanish Studies,* VIII (1931), 144-149. For the later history, see E. Allison Peers, *A History of the Romantic Movement in Spain,* 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1940), and Guillermo Díaz-Plaja, *Introducción al estudio del romanticismo español* (Madrid, 1942).

[44] Theophilo Braga, *Historia do Romantismo em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1880), p. 175.

[45] These dates come from the very complete collections of the Dictionary of the Czech Academy. I owe this information to the kindness of Professor Antonin Grund of Masaryk University at Brno, Czechoslovakia.

[46] *Poezje,* ed. J. Kallenbach (Kraków, 1930), pp. 45, 51.

between the new romantic poetry and the poetry still adhering to the rules.[46a]

We have left the English story, the most unusual development, for the conclusion. After Warton there had begun in England an extensive study of mediæval romances and of "romantic fiction." But there is no instance of a juxtaposition of "classical" and "romantic," nor any awareness that the new literature inaugurated by the *Lyrical Ballads* could be called romantic. Scott, in his edition of *Sir Tristram,* calls his text, "the first classical English romance."[47] An essay by John Forster, "On the Application of the Epithet Romantic,"[48] is merely a commonplace discussion of the relation between imagination and judgment with no hint of a literary application except to chivalrous romances.

The distinction of classical-romantic occurs for the first time in Coleridge's lectures, given in 1811, and is there clearly derived from Schlegel, since the distinction is associated with that of organic and mechanical, painterly and sculpturesque, in close verbal adherence to Schlegel's phrasing.[49] But these lectures were not published at that time, and thus the distinction was popularized in England only through Madame de Staël, who made Schlegel and Sismondi known in England. *De l'Allemagne,* first published in London, appeared almost simultaneously in an English translation. Two reviews, by Sir James Mackintosh and William Taylor of Norwich, reproduce the distinction between classical and romantic, and Taylor mentions Schlegel and knows of Madame de Staël's indebtedness to him.[50] Schlegel was in the company of Madame de Staël in England in 1814. The French translation of the *Lectures* was very favorably reviewed in the *Quarterly Review,*[51] and in 1815 John Black, an Edinburgh journalist, published his English translation. This was also very well received. Some reviews reproduce

[46a] N. V. Bogoslovski, ed., *Pushkin o literature* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1934), pp. 15, 35, 41, etc. Vyazemsky's review in *Synotechestva* (1822) was reprinted in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii* (Petersburg, 1878), I, 73-78.

[47] Edinburgh, 1804, p. xlvii.

[48] *Essays in a Series of Letters* (London, 1805).

[49] Coleridge's *Shakespearean Criticism,* ed. Thomas M. Raysor (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), I, 196-198, II, 265; and *Miscellaneous Criticism,* ed. T. M. Raysor (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), pp. 7, 148. Coleridge himself says that he received a copy of Schlegel's *Lectures* on Dec. 12, 1811; see S. T. Coleridge's *Unpublished Letters,* ed. Earl L. Griggs (London, 1932), II, 61-67. A MS by Henry Crabb Robinson, written about 1803, "Kant's Analysis of Beauty," now in the Williams Library, London, contains the distinction of classical-romantic; see my *Immanuel Kant in England* (Princeton, 1931), p. 158.

[50] *Edinburgh Review,* XXII (Oct. 1813), 198-238; *Monthly Review,* LXXII (1813), 421-426, LXXIII (1814), 63-68, 352-365, especially 364.

[51] *Quarterly Review,* XX (Jan. (1814), 355-409. I do not know the author: he is not given in the list of contributors in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* 1844, or in W. Graham's *Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review* (New York, 1921).

Schlegel's distinction quite extensively: for instance, Hazlitt's in the *Edinburgh Review*.[52] Schlegel's distinctions and views on many aspects of Shakespeare were used and quoted by Hazlitt, by Nathan Drake in his *Shakespeare* (1817), by Scott in his *Essay on Drama* (1819), and in *Ollier's Literary Magazine* (1820), which contains a translation of Schlegel's old essay on *Romeo and Juliet*. The use to which Coleridge put Schlegel in his lectures given after the publication of the English translation, needs no repetition.

The usual impression that the classical-romantic distinction was little known in England seems not quite correct.[53] It is discussed in Thomas Campbell's *Essay on Poetry* (1819), though Campbell finds Schlegel's defense of Shakespeare's irregularities on "romantic principles" "too romantic for his conception." In Sir Edgerton Brydges' *Gnomica* and *Sylvan Wanderer*, there is striking praise of romantic mediæval poetry and its derivations in Tasso and Ariosto in contrast to the classical abstract poetry of the eighteenth century.[54] We find only a few practical uses of these terms at that time: Samuel Singer, in his introduction to Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, says that "Musaeus is more classical, Hunt more romantic." He defends Marlowe's extravagancies which might excite the ridicule of French critics: "but here in England their reign is over and thanks to the Germans, with the Schlegels at their head, a truer philosophical method of judging is beginning to obtain among us."[55] De Quincey in 1835 attempted a more original elaboration of the dichotomy by stressing the role of Christianity and the difference in the attitudes toward death; but even these ideas are all derived from the Germans.[56]

But none of the English poets, we must stress, recognized himself as a romanticist or recognized the relevance of the debate to his own time and country. Neither Coleridge nor Hazlitt, who used Schlegel's *Lectures*, made such an application. Byron definitely rejects it. Though he knew (and disliked) Schlegel personally, had read *De l'Allemagne*, and even tried to read Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, he considered the distinction "romantic-classical" as merely a Continental debate. In a planned dedication of *Marino Falieri* to Goethe he refers to "the great struggle, in Germany, as well as in Italy, about what they call 'classical' and 'romantic'—terms which were not subjects of classification in England, at least when I left it four or five years ago." Byron contemptu-

[52] Feb. 1816. Reprinted in *Complete Works*, ed. Howe, XVI, 57-99.

[53] Further examples in Herbert Weisinger, "English Treatment of the Classical-Romantic Problem," in *Modern Language Quarterly*, VII (1946), 477-488.

[54] Issues dated Apr. 20, 1819, and Oct. 23, 1818.

[55] London, 1821 p. lvii.

[56] Cf. a full discussion in my "De Quincey's Status in the History of Ideas," *Philological Quarterly*, XXIII (1944), 248-272.

ously says of the enemies of Pope in the Bowles-Byron controversy, "nobody thought them worth making a sect of." "Perhaps there may be something of the kind sprung up latterly, but I have not heard of much about it, and it would be such bad taste that I shall be very sorry to believe it." Still, during the next year, Byron used the concepts in what seems to be a plea for the relativity of poetic staste. He argues that there are no invariable principles of poetry, that reputations are bound to fluctuate. "This does not depend upon the merits [of the poets] but upon the ordinary vicissitudes of human opinion. Schlegel and Mme de Staël have endeavoured also to reduce poetry to two systems, classical and romantic. The effect is only beginning." But there is no consciousness in Byron that he belongs to the romantics. An Austrian police spy knew better. He reported that Byron belongs to the *Romantici* and "has written and continues to write poetry of this new school."[57]

The actual application of the term "romantic" to English literature of the early nineteenth century is much later. Also the terms, "a romantic," "a romanticist," "romanticism," are very late in English and occur first in reports or notes on Continental phenomena. An article in English by Stendhal, in 1823, reviews his own book, *Racine et Shakespeare*, singling out the section on "Romanticism" for special praise.[58] Carlyle entered in his notebook, in 1827, that "Grossi is a romantic"—translating from the *Revue encyclopédique*. In his "State of German Literature" (1827) he speaks of the German "Romanticists." "Romanticism" occurs in his article on Schiller (1831), where he says complacently that "we are troubled with no controversies on romanticism and classicism—the Bowles controversy having long since evaporated without result."[59] There are, it seems, no instances of the application of these terms by Carlyle to the history of English literature. As late a book as Mrs. Oliphant's *Literary History of England between the End of the Eighteenth and the Beginning of the Nineteenth Centuries* (1882) shows no trace of the terms and their derivatives. She speaks merely of the Lake School, the Satanic School, and the Cockney Group. W. Bagehot used "romantic" with "classical" in a way which shows that they were not associated

[57] There is a copy of *De l'Allemagne*, with a long note by Byron, in the Harvard Library. Madame de Staël sent Byron Schlegel's *Lectures*; see Byron's *Letters and Journals*, ed. Lord Prothero, II, 343. On Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, cf. *Letters*, V, 191-193. The dedication of *Marino Falieri*, dated Oct. 17, 1820, *ibid.*, V, 100-104. The letter to Murray on Bowles, Feb. 7, 1821, *ibid.*, V, 553-554n. The police spy, Sept. 10, 1819, quoted *ibid.*, IV, 462.

[58] In the *New Monthly Magazine*, III (1823), 522-528, signed Y. I. See Doris Gunnell, *Stendhal et l'Angleterre* (Paris, 1909), pp. 162-163.

[59] *Two Notebooks*, ed. C. E. Norton (New York, 1898), p. 111. *Miscellanies* (London, 1890), I, 45 and III, 71. Cf. also II, 276. The *NED* gives much later examples of first occurrences: for "a romantic," 1882; for "romanticist," 1830; for "romanticism," 1844.

in his mind with a definite, established period of English literature: he speaks of Shelley's "classical imagination" (1856) and in 1864 contrasts the "classical Wordsworth" with the "romantic" Tennyson and the "grotesque" Browning.[60].

But this does not seem to be the entire story. Among the handbooks of English literature, Thomas Shaw's *Outlines of English Literature* (1849) is the earliest exception. He speaks of Scott as the "first stage in literature towards romanticism" and calls Byron the "greatest of romanticists," but separates Wordsworth for his "metaphysical quietism."[61] It may be significant that Shaw compiled his handbook originally for his classes at the Lyceum in St. Petersburg, where by that time, as everywhere on the Continent, the terms were established and expected.

In David Macbeth Moir's *Sketches of the Poetical Literature of the Past Half Century* (1852), Matthew Gregory Lewis is set down as the leader of the "purely romantic school" of which Scott, Coleridge, Southey, and Hogg are listed as disciples, while Wordsworth is treated independently. Scott is treated under the heading "The Revival of the Romantic School," though the term is not used in the text of the chapter.[62] W. Rushton's *Afternoon Lectures on English Literature* (1863) discusses the "Classical and Romantic School of English Literature as represented by Spenser, Dryden, Pope, Scott and Wordsworth."[63] The further spread and establishment of the term for English literature of the early nineteenth century is probably due to Alois Brandl's *Coleridge und die romantische Schule in England,* translated by Lady Eastlake (1887), and to the vogue of Pater's discussion of "Romanticism" in *Appreciations* (1889); it is finally established in books such as those of W. L. Phelps and Henry A. Beers.

If we survey the evidence assembled we can hardly escape several conclusions which seem important for our argument. The self-designation of writers and poets as "romantic" varies in the different countries considerably; many examples are late and of short duration. If we take self-designation as the basic criterion for modern use, there would be no romantic movement in Germany before 1808, none in France before 1818 or (since the 1818 example was an isolated instance, Stendhal) before 1824, and none at all in England. If we take the use of the word "romantic" for any kind of literature (at first mediæval romances, Tasso, and Ariosto) as our criterion, we are thrown back to 1669 in France, 1673 in England, 1698 in Germany. If we insist on taking the contrast between the terms "classical and romantic" as decisive, we arrive at the

[60] *Literary Studies,* ed. R. H. Hutton (London, 1905), I, 231 and II, 341.

[61] *A Complete Manual* (New York, 1867), pp. 290ff, 316, 341, 348, 415.

[62] Second ed., Edinburgh, 1852; six lectures delivered in 1850-51; cf. pp. 17, 117, 213.

[63] London, 1863. The lectures were given in Dublin.

dates 1801 for Germany, 1810 for France, 1811 for England, 1816 for Italy, etc. If we think that a realization of the quality of romanticism is particularly important, we would find the term "Romantik" in Germany in 1802, "Romantisme" in France in 1816, "Romanticismo" in Italy in 1818, and "Romanticism" in England in 1823. Surely, all these facts (even though the dates may be corrected) point to the conclusion that the history of the term and its introduction cannot regulate the usage of the modern historian, since he would be forced to recognize milestones in his history which are not justified by the actual state of the literatures in question. The great changes happened, independently of the introduction of these terms either before or after them and only rarely approximately at the same time.

On the other hand, the usual conclusion drawn from examinations of the history of the words, that they are used in contradictory senses, seems to me greatly exaggerated. One must grant that many German æstheticians juggle the terms in extravagant and personal ways, nor can one deny that the emphasis on different aspects of their meaning shifts from writer to writer and sometimes from nation to nation. But, on the whole, there was really no misunderstanding about the meaning of "romanticism" as a new designation for poetry, opposed to the poetry of neoclassicism, and drawing its inspiration and models from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The term is understood in this sense all over Europe, and everywhere we find references to August Wilhelm Schlegel or Madame de Staël and their particular formulas opposing "classical" and "romantic."

The fact that the convenient terms were introduced sometimes much later than the time when actual repudiation of the neoclassical tradition was accomplished does not, of course, prove that the changes were not noticed at that time.

The mere use of the terms "romantic" and "romanticism" must not be overrated. English writers early had a clear consciousness that there was a movement which rejected the critical concepts and poetic practice of the eighteenth century, that it formed a unity, and had its parallels on the continent, especially in Germany. Without the term "romantic" we can tract, within a short period, the shift from the earlier conception of the history of English poetry as one of a uniform progress from Waller and Denham to Dryden and Pope, still accepted in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets,* to Southey's opposite view in 1807, that the "time which elapsed from the days of Dryden to those of Pope is the dark age of English poetry." The reformation began with Thomson and the Wartons. The real turning point was Percy's *Reliques,* "the great literary epocha of the present reign."[64] Shortly afterwards, in Leigh Hunt's

[64] Introduction to *Specimens of the Later English Poets* (London, 1807), pp. xxix and xxxii.

Feast of the Poets (1814) we have the view established that Wordsworth is "capable of being at the head of a new and great age of poetry; and in point of fact, I do not deny that he is so already, as the greatest poet of the present."[65] In Wordsworth's own postscript to the 1815 edition of the *Poems,* the role of Percy's *Reliques* is again emphasized: "The poetry of the age has been absolutely redeemed by it."[66] In 1816, Lord Jeffrey acknowledged that the "wits of Queen Anne's time have been gradually brought down from the supremacy which they had enjoyed, without competition, for the best part of a century." He recognized that the "present revolution in literature" was due to the "French revolution—the genius of Burke—the impression of the new literature of Germany, evidently the original of our Lake School of poetry."[67] In Nathan Drake's book on *Shakespeare* (1817) the role of the revival of Elizabethan poetry is recognized. "Several of our bards," he says, "have in great degree reverted to the ancient school."[68] In Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets* (1818) a new age dominated by Wordsworth is described quite clearly, with its sources in the French revolution, in German literature, and its opposition to the mechanical conventions of the followers of Pope and the old French school of poetry. An article in *Blackwood's* sees the connection between the "great change in the poetical temper of the country" and the Elizabethan revival. "A nation must revert to the ancient spirit of its own. The living and creative spirit of literature is its nationality."[69] Scott uses Schlegel extensively and describes the general change as a "fresh turning up of the soil" due to the Germans and necessitated by the "wearing out" of the French models.[70] Carlyle in his introduction to selections from Ludwig Tieck draws the English-German parallel quite explicitly:

> Neither can the change be said to have originated in Schiller and Goethe: for it is a change originating not in individuals, but in universal circumstances, and belongs not to Germany, but to Europe. Among ourselves, for instance, within the last thirty years, who has not lifted his voice with double vigour in praise of Shakespeare and Nature, and vituperation of French taste and French philosophy? Who has not heard of the glories of old English literature, the wealth of Queen Elizabeth's age: the penury of Queen Anne's and the inquiry whether Pope was a poet? A similar temper is breaking out in France itself, hermetically sealed as that country seemed to be against all foreign influence; and doubts are beginning to be entertained, and even expressed, about Corneille and the Three Unities. It seems sub-

[65] Page 83.

[66] Wordsworth, *Prose Works,* ed. Grosart, II, 118, 124.

[67] Review of Scott's edition of Swift, in *Edinburgh Review,* Sept. 1816; *Contributions to Edinburgh Review* (2nd ed., London, 1846), I, 158-160.

[68] London, 1817, p. 600.

[69] *Blackwood's Magazine* (1818), IV, 264-266.

[70] In "Essay on Drama," contributed to *Encyclopedia Britannica,* Supplement, vol. III, 1819; *Miscellaneous Prose Works* (Edinburgh, 1834), VI, 380.

stantially the same thing which has occurred in Germany . . . only that the revolution, which is there proceeding, and in France commencing, appears in Germany to be completed.[71]

All of this is broadly true and applicable even today and has been wrongly forgotten by modern sceptics.

Scott, in a retrospect, "Essay on Imitations of the Ancient Ballads" (1830), also stressed the role of Percy and the Germans in the revival.

As far back as 1788 a new species of literature began to be introduced into the country. Germany . . . was then for the first time heard of as the cradle of a style of poetry and literature much more analogous to that of Britain than either the French, Spanish or Italian schools.

Scott tells of a lecture of Henry Mackenzie where the audience learned that the "taste which dictated the German compositions was of a kind as nearly allied to the English as their language." Scott learned German from Dr. Willich, who later expounded Kant in English. But, according to Scott, M. G. Lewis was the first who attempted to introduce something like German taste into English composition.[72]

Probably the most widely read of these pronouncements was T. B. Macaulay's account in his review of Moore's *Life of Byron*. There the period of 1750-80 is called the "most deplorable part of our literary history." The revival of Shakespeare, the ballads, Chatterton's forgeries, and Cowper are mentioned as the main agents of change. Byron and Scott are singled out as the great names. Most significantly, Macaulay realizes that

Byron, though always sneering at Mr. Wordsworth, was yet, though, perhaps unconsciously, the interpreter between Mr. Wordsworth and the multitude . . . Lord Byron founded what may be called an exoteric Lake School—what Mr. Wordsworth had said like a recluse, Lord Byron said like a man of the world.[73]

Macaulay thus long before he knew a term for it, recognized the unity of the English romantic movement.

James Montgomery, in his *Lectures on General Literature* (1833), described the age since Cowper as the third era of modern literature. Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge are called the "three pioneers, if not the absolute founders, of the existing style of English literature."[74]

The most boldly formulated definition of the new view is again in Southey, in the "Sketches of the Progress of English Poetry from

[71] "German Romance," in *Miscellanies* (London, 1890), I, 246.

[72] In new edition of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1830), ed. T. Henderson (New York, 1931), pp. 535-562, especially pp. 549-550. On Willich, see my *Kant in England* (Princeton, 1931), pp. 11-15.

[73] *Edinburgh Review*, June 1831. Reprinted in *Critical and Historical Essays* (Everyman ed.), II, 634-635.

[74] Lectures given in 1830-31.

Chaucer to Cowper" (1833). There the "age from Dryden to Pope" is called "the worst age of English poetry: the age of Pope was the pinchbeck age of poetry." "If Pope closed the door against poetry, Cowper opened it."[75] The same view, though less sharply expressed, can be found with increasing frequency even in textbooks, such as Robert Chambers' *History of the English Language and Literature* (1836), in De Quincey's writings, and R. H. Horne's *New Spirit of the Age* (1884).

None of these publications use the term "romantic," but in all of them we hear that there is a new age of poetry which has a new style inimical to that of Pope. The emphasis and selections of examples vary, but in combination they say that the German influence, the revival of the ballads and the Elizabethans, and the French Revolution were the decisive influences which brought about the change. Thomson, Burns, Cowper, Gray, Collins, and Chatterton are honored as precursors, Percy and the Wartons as initiators. The trio, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, are recognized as the founders and, as time progressed, Byron, Shelley, and Keats are added in spite of the fact that this new group of poets denounced the older for political reasons. Clearly, such books as those of Phelps and Beers merely carry out, in a systematic fashion, the suggestions made by the contemporaries and even the actual protagonists of the new age of poetry.

This general scheme is, to my mind, still substantially valid. It seems an unwarranted nominalism to reject it completely and to speak, as Ronald S. Crane does, of "the fairy tales about neoclassicism and romanticism"[76] in the eighteenth century. Not much seems accomplished by George Sherburn when he avoids the term in an excellent summary of what is generally called the romantic tendencies of the late eighteenth century, since he is admittedly confronted with the same problems and facts.[77]

One must grant, of course, that many details of the books of Phelps and Beers are mistaken and out of date. The new understanding of neoclassical theory and the new appreciation of eighteenth-century poetry, especially of Pope, have led to a reversal of the value judgments implied in the older conceptions. Romantic polemics give frequently a totally distorted picture of neoclassical theory, and some modern literary historians seen to have misunderstood the eighteenth-century meaning of such key terms as "Reason," "Nature," and "Imitation." Investiga-

[75] In Southey's ed. of *The Works* of Cowper, II, 109, 142.

[76] *Philological Quarterly*, XXII (1943), 143, in a review of an article by Curtis D. Bradford and Stuart Gerry Brown, "On Teaching the Age of Johnson" in *College English* III (1942), 650-659.

[77] In a *Literary History of England*, ed. A. C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 971n. The "Part" is called "The Disintegration of Classicism," the chapter "Accentuated Tendencies," terms which give away the argument against preromanticism.

tions have shown that the revival of Elizabethan, mediæval, and popular literature began much earlier than has been assumed. Objections against slavish imitation of the classics and strict adherence to the rules were commonplaces of English criticism, even in the seventeenth century. Many supposedly romantic ideas on the role of genius and imagination were perfectly acceptable to the main neoclassical critics. Much evidence has been accumulated to show that many of the precursors of romanticism—Thomson, the Wartons, Percy, Young, Hurd—shared the preconceptions of their age and held many basic neoclassical critical convictions, and cannot be called "revolutionaries" or "rebels."

We grant many of these criticisms and corrections of the older view. We may even side with the modern neoclassicists who deplore the dissolution of their creed and the extravagancies of the romantic movement. One should also grant that the hunt for "romantic" elements in the eighteenth century has become a rather tiresome game. A book such as Eric Partridge's *Eighteenth Century English Poetry* (1924) tried to identify "romantic" lines in Pope with great self-assurance. Partridge tells us that "nearly one-fifth of the total number of lines in *Eloisa to Abelard* are indisputably either markedly romantic in themselves or clearly romantic in tendency." He singles out lines in Dyer's *Fleece* as "romantic."[78] There are several German theses which break up an eighteenth-century critic or poet into his wicked pseudoclassical and his virtuous romantic halves.[79]

Nobody has ever suggested that the precursors of romanticism were conscious of being precursors. But their anticipations of romantic views and devices are important, even if it can be shown that these pronouncements, taken in their total context, need to be interpreted differently and were innocuous from a neoclassical point of view. The fact that a later age could fasten on certain passages in Young or Hurd or Warton is relevant—not the intentions of Young, Hurd, or Warton. It is the right of a new age to look for its own ancestors and even to pull passages out of their context. One can prove, as Hoyt Trowbridge has done,[80] that Hurd's total theory was neoclassical; but, in the perspective of a new age, only a few passages from the *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* mattered—Hurd's saying that the *Faerie Queene* "should be read and criticised under the idea of a Gothic, not a classical poem" and his plea for the "pre-eminence of the Gothic manners and fictions as adapted to

[78] London, 1924, pp. 72, 172. Lines 209-213, 385-389 of Dyer's poem are called "romantic."

[79] E.g., J. E. Anwander, *Pseudoklassizistisches und Romantisches in Thomsons Seasons* (Leipzig, 1930); Sigyn Christiani, *Samuel Johnson als Kritiker im Lichte von Pseudo-Klassizismus und Romantik* (Leipzig, 1931).

[80] "Bishop Hurd: A Reinterpretation," *PMLA*, LVIII (1943), 450-465.

the end of poetry, above the classic."[81] The argument against the very existence of romanticism in the eighteenth century is based on the prejudice that only the totality of a writer's works is the criterion of judgment, while in the many instances which are constantly being produced to show that individual romantic ideas can be traced to the seventeenth century or beyond, the opposite method is employed—an atomistic view which ignores the question of emphasis, place in a system, frequency of occurrence. Both methods have been manipulated interchangeably.

The best solution seems to say that the student of neoclassical literature is right in refusing to see every figure and idea merely in terms of the role it may have played in the preparation of romanticism. But this refusal should not amount to a denial of the problem of the preparation of a new age. One could also study the new age for its survivals of the neoclassical norms,[82] a point of view which could prove illuminating, though it could hardly be considered of equal standing. Time flows in one direction and mankind for some reason (craze for novelty, dynamism, creativity?) is interested more in origins than in residues. If there were no preparations, anticipations, and undercurrents in the eighteenth century which could be described as preromantic, we would have to make the assumption that Wordsworth and Coleridge fell from heaven and that the neoclassical age was unperturbedly solid, unified, and coherent in a way no age has ever been before or since.

An important compromise has been propounded by Northrop Frye.[83] He argues that the second half of the eighteenth century is a "new age" which has "nothing to do with the Age of Reason. It is the age of Collins, Percy, Gray, Cowper, Smart, Chatterton, Burns, Ossian, the Wartons and Blake." "Its chief philosopher is Berkeley and its chief prose writer Sterne." "The age of Blake," he concludes, "has been rather unfairly treated by critics, who have tended to see in it nothing but a transition with all its poets either reacting against Pope or anticipating Wordsworth." Mr. Frye unfortunately ignores the fact that Hume rather than Berkeley dominated the philosophy of the age and that Dr. Johnson was then very much alive. Blake remained totally unknown in his time. In Thomas Warton, certainly, we have a recognition of classical standards and a tempered appreciation of Gothic picturesqueness and sublimity, a theory of a double standard of poetry which apparently was held by him without a feeling of contradiction.[84] Still, the contradic-

[81] Ed. Edith Morley (Oxford, 1911), pp. 115 and 128.

[82] Suggested by Louis Landa in *Philological Quarterly*, XXII (1943), 147. Cf. Pierre Moreau, *Le Classicisme des romantiques* (Paris, 1932).

[83] In *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (Princeton, 1947), especially p. 167.

[84] Cf. fuller discussion in my *Rise of English Literary History* (Chapel Hill, 1941), especially pp. 185-186.

tions are inherent in the whole position and it is hard to see what can be objected to calling it "preromantic." One can observe a process by which these scattered and underground tendencies strengthen and collect; some writers become "doubles," houses divided, and thus, seen from the perspective of a later time, can be called "preromantic." We can, it seems, go on speaking of "preromanticism" and romanticism, since there are periods of the dominance of a system of ideas and poetic practices which have their anticipations in the preceding decades. The terms "romantic" and "romanticism," though late by the dates of their introduction, were everywhere understood in approximately the same sense and are still useful as terms for the kind of literature produced after neoclassicism.

In the second half of this paper I shall attempt to show that this body of literature forms a unity if we apply a few simple criteria and that the same criteria are valid for all the three major romantic movements—English, French, and German.

(*To be concluded*)

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ANTIKE RHETORIK UND VERGLEICHENDE LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT

ERNST ROBERT CURTIUS

1. Die Angst vor der Nacht im Mittelalter

DIE seelische Reaktion auf die Tages- und Jahreszeiten ist, je nach den Individuen, den Himmelsstrichen, den Epochen, verschieden. Die Dichter pflegen den Frühling zu loben. Aber es gibt Ausnahmen. T. S. Eliot erklärt:

> April is the cruellest month of the year.

Keats bevorzugte den Herbst. Swinburne hat die panische Stunde des Sommers gefeiert:

> Summer, and noon, and a splendour of silence . . .

Es gibt Dichter, die den Morgen lieben, wie Wordsworth:

> This City now doth, like a garment, wear
> The beauty of the morning . . .

Im 18. Jahrhundert entdeckte man die Poesie der Nacht.[1] Wie haben frühere Epochen auf die Nacht reagiert? Dámaso Alonso, der uns so fruchtbare neue Einsichten in die Lebensgesetze der spanischen Literatur eröffnet hat, sagt in seinen *Ensayos sobre Poesía española* (Madrid, 1944, p. 29):

> Allá por el año de 1243 Gonzalo de Berceo vivía en su frío Norte. Siempre nos le imaginamos escribiendo, apresurado, ante el terror medieval de la noche vecina:
>
> los días non son grandes, anochezrá privado:
> escribir en tiniebra es un mester pesado.

Dürfen wir mit Dámaso Alonso aus diesen Versen schliessen, dass Berceo—oder das ganze Mittelalter—in der Angst vor der einbrechenden Nacht lebte? Haben wir eine persönliche Aussage des Dichters vor uns? den Ausdruck einer subjektiven Stimmung? Die Verse sind der *Vida de Santa Oria* entnommen. Ihnen gehen die folgenden voraus:

> Auemos en el prologo mucho detardado;
> Siguamos la estoria, esto es agujsado.

[1] Paul Van Tieghem, *La Poésie de la nuit et des tombeaux* (1930), pp. 3-203.

Der Hinweis auf den sinkenden Tag motiviert also den Abschluss des Prologes und leitet zum Hauptteil über. Sollte Berceo diesen Kunstgriff erfunden haben? Oder kommt er auch bei anderen mittelalterlichen Dichtern vor? In meinem Buch *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*[2] habe ich einige Fälle angeführt. Sigebert von Gembloux (gest. 1112) schliesst das erste Buch seiner *Passio sanctorum Thebeorum* ab, weil es Nacht geworden sei. Da er die Alpen bei solcher Zeit nicht überschreiten kann, muss er aufhören. Ein Anonymus beendigt ein Gedicht über London aus demselben Grunde:

Cetera pretereo quia preterit hora diei.
Terminat hora diem, terminat auctor opus.

Walter von Châtillon schliesst seine *Alexandreis* mit den Versen:

Phœbus anhelantes convertit ad aequora currus:
Jam satis est lusum, iam ludum incidere praestat,
Pierides, alios deinceps modulamina vestra
Alliciant animos: alium mihi postulo fontem;
Qui semel exhaustus sitis est medicina secundae.

Also drei Variationen desselben Motivs in der lateinischen Dichtung des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts. Wir werden die Verse Berceos jetzt in anderem Lichte betrachten. Sie enthalten—wie unsere lateinischen Beispiele—die Begründung für den Abschluss einer poetischen Composition oder eines ihrer Teile. Berceo hat den Gedanken der literarischen Technik seiner Zeit entnommen. Hat er ihm eine persönliche Note gegeben? Eine gewisse Naivität und Biederkeit? Das wäre zu untersuchen. Den psychologischen Rückschluss auf den terror medieval de la noche vecina werden wir aber wohl modifizieren müssen. Es liegt offenbar kein persönliches "Erlebnis" des Dichters vor, sondern Anwendung eines gebräuchlichen Schemas.

Auch im sonnigen Süden kann der sinkende Tag als Schlussformel auftreten, vor allem dann, wenn ein Gespräch im Freien geführt wird. Dies ist die fingierte Situation in Ciceros *De oratore*. Gegen Ende (III, 209) sagt der eine Unterredner: "His autem de rebus sol me ille admonuit ut brevior essem, qui ipse iam praecipitans me quoque haec praecipitem paene evolvere coegit." Aber auch die Hirtendichtung benutzt dieses Motiv:

Maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae.
Et sol crescentes decedens duplicat umbras.
Ite domum saturae, venit Hesperus, ite capellae.

Das sind virgilische Eklogenschlüsse (I, II, X). Garcilaso variiert sie in seiner ersten Ekloge:

[2] Erschienen 1948 bei A. Francke AG., Bern. Dort p. 98. Ich verweise auf dieses Buch für die Fundorte der folgenden mittellateinischen Citate.

Nunca pusieran fin al triste lloro
Los pastores, ni fueran acabadas
Las canciones que solo el monte oía,
Si mirando las nubes coloradas,
Al trasmontar del sol bordadas de oro,
No vieran que era ya pasado el día.

Auch Miltons *Lycidas* schliesst mit Sonnenuntergang:

And now the Sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the Western bay . . .

Aber auch die "geistlichen" Eklogen des lateinischen Mittelalters (die *Ecloga Theoduli,* der *Synodicus* des Warnerius von Basel u.a.), in denen das Gespräch fiktiver Schäfer moralisch-religiöser Belehrung dient, benutzen denselben Kunstgriff. All das mag hinter den Versen des Berceo stehen. Der "kalte Norden" hätte dann sein rhetorisch-poetisches Cliché den Mittelmeerländern entlehnt.

2. Historische Topik

Wie werden wir ein solches Cliché bezeichnen? Valéry Larbaud bemerkt: "Un ouvrage de critique vraiment 'scientifique' dont le manque se fait sentir, c'est une sorte de Répertoire des thèmes que nous rencontrons si souvent chez les Lyriques modernes à partir de Pétrarque."[8] Als Probe eines solchen Repertoriums führt Larbaud das Thema la belle mendiante in der Behandlung von Tristan l'Hermite (1601-1656), Claudio Achillini (1574-1640), Philip Ayres (1638-1712) vor. "Thema" ist hier im muskalischen Sinne genommen: eine melodische Phrase, über die Variationen ausgeführt werden. Aber das Wort Thema hat noch so viele andere Bedeutungen, und es gibt auch ausserhalb der Lyrik so viele Themen und Motive, dass es wünschenswert erscheint, für den Begriff "literarisches Thema" einen terminus technicus zu brauchen, der nicht verwechselt werden kann. In dem Teil der antiken Rhetorik, der zur "Findung" (inventio) des Materials anleitet, werden Anweisungen zum Finden von Argumenten gegeben, die bei der Gerichtsrede, der Lobrede usw. verwandt werden können. Die "Sitze" solcher Argumente, "aus denen sie hervorgeholt werden müssen," nennt Quintilian loci (V, 10, 20): "locos appello . . . sedes argumentorum, in quibus latent, ex quibus sunt petenda." Fundörter, die für Reden verschiedenster Art brauchbar sind, heissen "gemeinsame Oerter," loci communes, koinoi topoi. Im ausgehenden Altertum wurde zwar das Gebiet der öffentlichen Rede auf die Prunkrede (panegyricus) eingeschränkt, die Rhetorik selbst aber intensiv gepflegt. Sie fand Eingang

[8] Valéry Larbaud, *Technique* (1932), p. 79. Wieder abgedruckt in Valéry Larbaud, *Sous l'invocation de saint Jérôme* (1946), p. 285.

in die Poesie und in jede Art der Composition. Sie wurde allgemeine Formenlehre der Literatur. Die loci communes wurden im Laufe dieser Entwicklung immer wichtiger und immer zahlreicher. Aus der Poesie flossen der Rhetorik neue Topoi zu. Sie wurden katalogisiert und auf den Schulen gelehrt. Schon das griechische Altertum hatte eine Lehre von den forensischen topoi entwickelt, die Topik hiess. Noch Isidor von Sevilla hat sie als mirabile genus operis, als Wunder des Menschengeistes, gepriesen. Eine allgemeine Kodifikation der literarischen und poetischen Topoi hat das Mittelalter aber nicht hervorgebracht. Sie wurden im Unterricht mündlich überliefert, an der Lektüre der Autoren exemplifiziert und bei der Abfassung lateinischer Gedichte angewandt. Wir müssen sie aus den mittelalterlichen Texten reconstruieren. So haben wir Berceos Ankündigung: "Ich schliesse den Prolog, weil es dunkel wird" auf einen mittellateinischen Schluss- und Uebergangstopos zurückführen können. Für diese Betrachtungsweise schlage ich den Namen "historische Topik" vor. Wir unterscheiden in ihr formale Topoi—wie "Dunkelwerden als Motivierung des Abschlusses"—von inhaltlichen Topoi wie la belle mendiante. Als vergleichende Toposforchung kann sie, wie wir an Berceo sahen, zur Feststellung historischer Abhängigkeiten führen.

3. Epische Formeln

Das bestätigt sich, wie ich glaube, durch Beobachtungen am mittelalterlichen Epos. Wie man weiss, ist das Verhältnis der spanischen zur altfranzösischen Epik umstritten. Menéndez Pidal (*Poema de mio Cid*, in der Serie Clásicos castellanos, dritte Auflage, 1929, pp. 39-44) erkennt Nachahmung des französischen Epenstiles im *Cid* in drei Fällen an: (1) beschreibende Aufzählungen, die mit "veriedes" beginnen und dem französischen la veïssiez (*Roland*, 349, 1341, 1399, 1655, 1680, 3387) entsprechen; (2) "erzählende Gebete"; (3) die Formel llorar de los ojos (plorer des oilz im Rolandslied). Die erste dieser drei Stil-Eigentümlichkeiten scheint der grosse spanische Forscher aus dem Spielmannsvortrag ableiten zu wollen: "el verbo 'veríais,' con que el juglar se dirige a sus oyentes y procura sugerirles una viva representación de lo que va a narrar." Aber die Formel hat ein respektables Alter. Sie tritt bei Homer auf (z.B. *Ilias*, IV, 223) und wird von Virgil übernommen (*Aeneis*, IV, 401):

Migrantes cernas totaque ex urbe ruentes.

Schon Macrobius hat darauf aufmerksam gemacht: "Saepe Homerus inter narrandum velut ad aliquem dirigit orationem . . . nec hoc Vergilius praetermisit" (*Saturnalia*, V, 14, 9). Wir haben hier also einen antiken Topos des epischen Stiles vor uns, der in die chansons de geste

übergegangen ist—jedenfalls auf dem Wege über den mittelalterlichen Rhetorik-Unterricht und die Erklärung der klassischen Autoren. Zu dem angeführten Vergilvers hatte der Kommentator Servius bemerkt: "Honesta figura, si rem tertiae personae in secundam referas, hoc est: siquis cernat." Wir dürfen sicher sein, dass die volkssprachlichen Epiker des Mittelalters sich solche Hinweise der antiken Erklärer und Grammatiker zunutze gemacht haben.[4]

Ausser der von mir so genannten cernas-Formel findet man manche andere antike Stilelemente im mittelalterlichen Epos. Dazu gehören virgilische Pathosformeln, die Macrobius im sechsten Kapitel des vierten Buches seiner Saturnalien zusammengestellt hatte. Er erwähnt dort § 10ff.

(1) die Apostrophierung von Waffen (*Aeneis*, XII, 95f. = *Roland*, 2004);

(2) die addubitatio (quid faciat? *Aeneis*, IX, 399 = *Roland*, 1185, 2812, 2961, 3956);

(3) die Hyperbel;

(4) die exclamatio mit Anrufung der Götter (*Aeneis*, VI, 529; *Roland*, 716, 1849, 3164).

Es liesse sich noch mehr anführen. Aber das Gesagte genügt schon zum Nachweis, dass Turold, der Dichter der *Chanson de Roland*, bei Virgil in die Schule gegangen ist. Die cernas-Formel wurde bei ihm la veïssiez und ging dann als francesismo in das spanische Epos über.

Eine exakt verfahrende "epische Topik" würde aber im *Poema de mio Cid* noch weitere francesismos auffinden können. In Vers 1308ff. wird die Reise des Álbar Fáñez von Valencia nach Castilien berichtet mit dem auffälligen Zusatz:

Dexarévos las posadas, non las quiero contar.

Das erinnert an *Le Couronnement Louis*:

269 De ses jornees ne sai que vos contasse.

In *Aymeri de Narbonne* (ed. Demaison, 1887) finden wir:

3252 De lor jornees ne quier fere devis.
3492 De lor jornees ne vos quier deviser.
3828 De ses jornees ne vos conterai ja.
3900 De lor jornees ne vos quier a conter.

[4] Servius ist viel benutzt worden. Georg Baesecke hat ihn als Quelle der "germanischen" Wielandsage erwiesen—*Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, LXI, (1937), pp. 368-378. Die Melibea der *Celestina* dürfte ihren Namen von der Meliboea haben, deren traurige Geschichte Servius zu *Aeneis*, I, 720 erzählt. Vielleicht auch die Todesart (semet de tecto praecipitavit). Bei Thilo-Hagen, I, p. 200-201.

Die Wendung "Einzelheiten der Reise übergehe ich" tritt also zum ersten Mal im *Couronnement Louis* auf. In *Aymeri* ist sie zum Cliché geworden. Der Cid-Dichter scheint es übernommen zu haben. Das *Couronnement Louis* wurde von Voretzsch ohne Begründung auf ca. 1130 datiert. Nach den Forschungen von Ph. A. Becker bildet es mit dem *Charroi de Nîmes*, der *Prise d'Orange* und dem *Moniage Guillaume* eine epische Wilhelmstetralogie, die von Saint-Denis inspiriert und um 1160 verfasst ist.[5] Derselbe Forscher datiert *Aymeri de Narbonne* um 1170.[6] Hat der Cid-Dichter einen epischen Topos aus dem *Couronnement* und *Aymeri* entlehnt, so kann er nicht vor 1170 geschrieben haben. Sein Gedicht wäre also um dreissig Jahre jünger, als Menéndez Pidal lehrt.

Eine Stütze für diese Annahme glaube ich in einem weiteren francesismo sehen zu dürfen. Die Infanten von Carrión gelangen in den Eichwald von Corpes:

2697 Entrados son los ifantes al robredo de Corpes,
los montes son altos, las ramas pujan con las nuoves,
elas bestias fieras que andan aderredor.
Fallaron un vergel con una limpia fuont.

Merkwürdige Szenerie! Ein Hochwald mit wilden Tieren, darin ein Obstgarten: "huerto con variedad de flores y árboles frutales." (Akademie-Wörterbuch unter *vergel.*) Menéndez Pidal gibt zu *vergel* die Erklärung: "sin duda significa una mancha de floresta (álamos, fresnos, etc.) con pradera o verdegal; desconozco otros textos que usen la palabra en esta acepción."[7] Liegt est nicht näher, in dem französischen Lehnwort vergel den verger zu erkennen, der in der französischen Epik so beliebt ist (*Roland*, 11, 103, 501)? Gibt es aber Obst- und Lustgärten auch im wilden Walde? Es gibt sie jedenfalls in der Literatur. Im Thebenroman (um 1150) liest man:

2126 Joste le pié d'une montaigne
En un val entre merveillos
Qui mout ert laiz e tenebros . . .
2141 Mout chevauchoent a grant peine,
Quant aventure les ameine
A un vergier que mout ert genz,
Que onc espice ne pimenz
Que hon peust trover ne dire
De cel vergier ne fu a dire.

[5] Philipp August Becker, *Das Werden der Wilhelm- und der Aimerigeste* (1939) (= *Abhandlungen der phil.-hist. Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, XLIV, Heft 1). Die Datierung dort p. 59. In der Abhandlung *Der Liederkreis um Vivien* (Sitzungsberichte Wien, CCXXIII, 1944, 1. Abhandlung, p. 45) verlegt Becker das vierteilige Wilhelmsleben in die 1160er Jahre.

[6] *Das Werden der Wilhelm- und der Aimerigeste*, p. 118.

[7] *Cantar de mio Cid*, II (1911), pp. 894 *et seq.*

Der epische Baumgarten müsste im Zusammenhang mit der mittelalterlichen Naturschilderung betrachet werden. Sie arbeitet mit conventionellen Requisiten, die für alle Stoffe dienen müssen wie die Versatzstücke unserer Theater: die Büsche, Brunnen, Rasenbänke usw., die für Shakespeare ebenso verwandt werden wie für Verdi oder Richard Wagner. Zu den Natur-Requisiten der mittelalterlichen Dichtung gehören Oelbäume, Pinien, Palmen, Lorbeerbäume. Man hat sie auf die Berichte von Kaufleuten und Pilgern zurückführen wollen: "Ce furent assurément leurs récits qui . . . à ces poètes du Nord firent connaître la beauté de l'olivier méditerranéen, qu'avec un goût naïf de l'exotisme et un admirable mépris de la couleur locale les chansons plantent bravement sur les collines de la Bourgogne et de la Picardie."[8] Aber wir finden diese exotischen Bäume schon in der lateinischen Dichtung der Karolingerzeit, und noch Shakespeares Ardennerwald (*As You Like It*) enthält Palmen, Oelbäume—und Löwen. Auch die chansons de geste wimmeln von Löwen. Ein solches Tier, das aus Rom kommt, heisst un lion d'antiquité (*Aiol*, 1179). Wie zutreffend! Denn die exotische Fauna und Flora des Mittelalters stammt aus dem Magazin der lateinischen Poesie und Rhetorik. Sie ist Traditions-Element wie Berceos Hinweis auf den Einbruch der Nacht.

Die epischen Formeln, die wir kennen lernten, gehören verschiedenen Zeit- und Stilstufen an. Der Baumgarten im wilden Wald tritt in Frankreich, wie wir sahen, erst um 1150, und zwar in der höfischen Bearbeitung der *Thebais* des Statius auf, also in einer Gattung, die als Neuschöpfung neben das ältere Heldenepos tritt. Die Herkunft des Topos soll hier nicht untersucht werden. Genug, dass er nicht aus den chansons de geste stammt. Diese selbst enthalten Elemente virgilischer Provenienz, wie die cernas-Formel. Die Formel

De lor jornees ne vos quier a conter

gehört aber nicht dazu. Sie besagt, dass der detaillierte Bericht über Reisen der Epenhelden um 1170 verbraucht war. Er vermochte die Hörer nicht mehr zu interessieren. Dem trug der Dichter Rechnung. Das wird noch klarer, wenn man ähnliche Formen der praeteritio vergleicht. Anlässlich einer Mahlzeit sagt der Thebenroman:

828 Enuiz seroit a desraisnier
Et d'aconter trestoz les mes . . .

oder:

4775 Ne sai conte dire des mes
Qui sovent vindrent et espès.

[8] Marc Bloch, *La Société féodale. La Formation des liens de dépendance* (1939), p. 155.

Aehnliche Formeln finden sich in *Les Narbonnais* (3134, 3280, 7801), in der *Prise d'Orange* (554), in *Aymeri de Narbonne* (970) und sonst. Auch die Kampfszenen (Androktasien) werden seit dem Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts sehr kurz abgemacht. So in Chrétiens *Perceval* (ed. Hilka, 1932):

2228 Ne sai que plus vos devisasse,
Ne comment avint a chascun,
Ne toz les cos par un et un;
Mes la bataille dura mout.

Albert von Stade (13. Jh.) hat in seinem *Troilus* eine zwölftägige Schlacht zu schildern und erledigt das in wenigen Versen, wobei er hinzufügt (III, 345ff.):

Quid juvat assidue clavas, quid tela, quid enses,
Quid mortes, mortis quid numerare modos?
Aut seriem scindet stilus aut fastidia gignet,
Si necis omne genus enumerare velis.

Das *Carmen de prodicione Guenonis*, das eine Bearbeitung des Rolandsliedes aus dem 13. Jahrhundert darstellt,[9] resümiert die Einzelkämpfe von *Roland* 1213-80 durch die Verse:

167 Samson, Turpinus, Oliverus, Gero, Gerinus
Quinque prosternunt corpora, quisque sua.

Dann

269 Post alii quinque prosternunt corpora quinque.
273 Ut mos est, mox quinque fugant et quinque fugantur.

Reisen, Mahlzeiten, Kämpfe: das will man also seit 1170 nicht mehr ausführlich hören. Der höfische Geschmack erfreut sich an der psychologischen Analyse und am Wunderbaren. Der blosse Tatsachenbericht wird zurückgedrängt. Das sind nur einige Andeutungen zur Geschichte des epischen Stiles im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert. Sie ist noch nicht geschrieben.

4. Puer senex

Eine historische Topik wird sich die Frage stellen müssen, ob wir das Auftauchen neuer Topoi beobachten und chronologisch fixieren können. Dafür ein Beispiel! Gregor der Grosse eröffnet sein Leben des heiligen Benedikt mit dem Satz: "Fuit vir vitae venerabilis . . . ab ipso suae pueritiae tempore cor gerens senile." Für den modernen Menschen, der Jugendlichkeit über alles schätzt und sie sich bis ins Alter hinein

[9] Vgl. meine Abhandlung in der *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*, LXII (1942), 492-509.

bewahren möchte, ist das ein höchst befremdendes Lob. Wie haben wir es zu verstehen? Suchen wir zunächst in der Bibel! Von Tobias wird berichtet, er sei der jüngste von allen gewesen, habe aber nie kindisch gehandelt: "cumque esset junior omnibus . . . nihil tamen puerile gessit in opere" (1, 4). Die Weisheit Salomons (4, 8ff.) erklärt das Alter für ehrwürdig; doch sei es nicht nach den Jahren zu messen: "cani sunt sensus hominis," d.h. "das wahre Alter für die Menschen ist die Weisheit." Die Patristik hat aus diesem Spruch das Ideal der canities animae (Ambrosius), canities morum (Augustin), canities sensuum (Cassian) entwickelt. Prudentius rühmt der zwölfjährigen Eulalia nach, ihre kindliche Sittsamkeit habe der Altersweisheit nachgestrebt:

Moribus et nimium teneris
Canitiem meditata senum.

Aber auch Claudian preist hohe Würdenträger, weil ihre feurige Jugend mit dem Gemüt eines Greises verbunden sei:

Sed gravibus curis animum sortita senilem
Ignea longaevo frenatur corde iuventus.[10]

Christliche Töne sind Claudian fremd. Seine Verse legen die Vermutung nahe, dass sie eine Fühlweise und Wertung der heidnischen Spätantike ausdrücken. Wirklich finden wir bei Petronius senilis in iuvene prudentia (*Florida*, IX, 38). Gehen wir weiter zurück! Der jüngere Plinius betrauert den Tod einer Dreizehnjährigen, der suavitas puellaris, anilis prudentia, matronalis gravitas eigneten (*Ep.*, V, 16). Ovid erklärt die Verbindung von Mannesreife und Jugend als eine Himmelsgabe, die Cäsaren verliehen werde (*Ars amandi*, I, 183ff.). Virgil schmückt damit den Knaben Julus (*Aeneis*, IX, 311):

Ante annos animumque gerens curamque virilem.

In diesem und ähnlichen Versen—oder vielmehr in der zugrundeliegenden Fühlweise—kann man einen Keim des Topos puer senex erblicken. Man findet ihn als hagiographisches Schema im ganzen Mittelalter wieder. Er dient aber auch, wei bei Claudian, profanem Gebrauch. Noch Góngora huldigt einem Vizekönig mit den Worten:

Florido en años, en prudencia cano.

Damit soll ein Lob ausgesprochen werden. Die Topoi des Lobes bilden eine Klasse für sich. Sie wurzeln in Idealvorstellungen von menschlicher Grösse, Würde, Vollendung, die mit den Epochen wechseln. Der puer senex reflektiert ein heute verblasstes, wenn nicht vergessenes, Menschenideal, in dem der Naturgegensatz von Jugend und Alter aus-

[10] *Panegyricus* auf die Consuln Probinus und Olybrius, Vers 154f.

geglichen ist. Wir fanden es in der römischen Spätantike zuerst bei Plinius. Es muss im ersten Jahrhundert der Kaiserzeit—nach Virgil, vor Plinius—zuerst in das Bewusstsein getreten sein. Als Gregor der Grosse um 600 die Vita des abendländischen Mönchsvaters schrieb, wurde es wohl noch lebendig empfunden. In der Folgezeit verlor es seinen Erlebnisgehalt und wurde zur rhetorischen Formel. Die Analyse eines Topos hat uns in diesem Fall nicht nur zur Feststellung einer rhetorischen Kontinuität geführt, die von Claudian bis Góngora reicht, sondern zur Aufdeckung eines spätantiken Lebensideals, also zu einem psychologischen Fund. Wir hatten ausserdem gesehen, dass dieses Ideal sich sowohl in den jüngsten Schichten des Alten Testamentes findet (das Buch Tobias stammt aus dem zweiten oder ersten, die Weisheit Salomons aus dem ersten Jahrhundert vor Christus) wie in der heidnischen Literatur. Sollte sein Ursprung in der religiösen Sphäre liegen? Eine Umschau in der Geschichte der Religionen führt in der Tat zu dem Ergebnis, dass im fernen Osten wie im Westen Götter und Heilbringer als greise Kinder oder Jünglinge mit weissem Haar vorgestellt werden. Es dürfte sich um ein Bild des kollektiven Unbewussten, einen archetypus im Sinne von C. G. Jung, handeln.[11]

Die Verbindung von Jugend und Greisenalter oder den Wechsel zwischen beiden (Verjüngung einer Greisin) finden wir auch bei zahlreichen weiblichen Personifikationen. Dahin gehört die Gestalt der Kirche im "Hirten" des Hermas, die Göttin Roma und die Natura bei Claudian,[12] die Philosophia in der *Consolatio* des Boethius. Diese Gestalten haben eine zahlreiche Nachkommenschaft in der allegorischen Dichtung des hohen und späten Mittelalters.

5. Kultismus und Konzeptismus

Oft lässt sich das Nachleben spätantiker Stilelemente bis in das 17. Jahrhundert verfolgen. Das en prudencia cano Góngoras war ein Beispiel. Es ist aber keine vereinzelte Kuriosität. Der literarische Manierismus Spaniens greift auf Stilideale der Kaiserzeit zurück und bedient sich ihrer Terminologie. Ovid nennt seine Gedichte culta carmina (*Ars amandi*, 3, 341). Martial ermutigt einen Dichter (I, 25, 1f.):

et cultum docto pectore profer opus.

Der cultismo konnte sich auch auf Quintilians Lehre von den drei Graden des Redeschmucks berufen: "eius primi gradus sunt in eo quod velis concipiendo et exprimendo, tertius, qui haec nitidiora faciat, quod pro-

[11] Vgl. mein oben genanntes Buch, p. 109.
[12] *De bello Gildonico*, I, 17-212 und *De consulatu Stilichonis*, II, 431ff.

prie dixeris cultum" (VIII, 3, 61). Wir finden hier concipere und cultus nebeneinander gestellt. Neben Quintilian war, wie man weiss, Martianus Capella die grosse Autorität des Abendlandes. Als er die Matrone Rhetorica einführt, schildert er (428) die Wirkung ihrer Rede: "Audire operae pretium fuit . . . tantae inventionis ingenium . . . Qualis disponendi ordo . . . quae profunditas in conceptu!" Beachten wir, dass das Wesen der rhetorischen Erfindung hier im ingenium gesehen wird, der krönende Vorzug aber in der "tiefen, gedanklichen Konzeption." Ist es Zufall oder bewusste Reminiszenz, dass Gracián im selben Sinne profundidad de concepto braucht (*Agudeza y arte de ingenio*, Discurso 45)? Graciáns Begriff eines arte de ingenio beruht auf der Unterscheidung von iudicium und ingenium, die man schon bei Quintilian findet und die Juan de Valdés erörtert hatte (*Diálogo de la lengua*, ed. Montesinos, p. 165). Bei Gracián wird sie so formuliert: "no se contenta el ingenio con sola la verdad, como el juicio, sino que aspira a la hermosura" (*Agudeza*, Discurso 2). Auch der Begriff agudeza knüpft an lateinische Stilkritik an: die oratio acuta wird von Cicero gerühmt (*Brutus*, 27, 104). Er braucht acumen und prudentia als nächstverwandte Begriffe, die der inventio angehören (*Brutus*, 62, 221). Agudeza, ingenio, concepto, culto, cultura[13]—diese Begriffe sind complementär. Gracián hat die agudeza als Mittel empfohlen "para exprimir cultamente sus conceptos" (*Agudeza*, Vorrede an den Leser). Er meinte, damit eine Lücke der antiken Literaturtheorie zu schliessen ("hallaron los antiguos método al silogismo, arte al tropo; sellaron la agudeza . . .") In Wirklichkeit hat er den spanischen Manierismus systematisiert—ein Unternehmen, das er selbst in einem weiteren Systemzusammenhang sah. Die *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* sollte dem *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* entsprechen; dieses Werk dem iudicium, jenes dem ingenium: "corone al juicio el arte de prudencia, lauree al ingenio el arte de agudeza" (Discurso 63). Beide Werke wiederum ordnen sich in jene Parallel-Systematik der menschlichen Idealtypen ein, von der Gracián noch den Héroe, den Político und den Discreto geliefert hat.

Gracián knüpft an ein Epigramm an, das er, einer handschriftlichen Ueberlieferung folgend, dem Julius Caesar zuschrieb:

> Thrax puer adstricto glacie dum luderet Hebro,
> Frigore frenatas pondere rupit aquas,
> Cumque imae partes fundo raperentur ab imo,
> Abscidit a iugulo lubrica testa caput.
> Orba quod inventum mater dum conderet igni,
> "Hoc peperi flammis, cetera" dixit "aquis."

[13] "Oh, tu, cualquiera que aspiras a la inmortalidad, con la agudeza y cultura de tus obras . . ." (*Agudeza*, Disc. 51).

Das Gedicht ist aber bei Paulus Diaconus überliefert und scheint die Umsetzung eines spätgriechischen Epigramms zu sein.[14] Es gehört in den Manierismus der Spätantike, den Ausonius und Appolinaris Sidonius dem Mittelalter vermacht haben. Die lateinische Dichtung des 12. Jahrhunderts (Alanus von Lille, Walter von Châtillon u.a.) hat ihn wieder aufgenommen. Sie schwelgt in künstlichen Antithesen und gesuchten Metaphern--Metaphern, die man bei den spanischen Manieristen des 17. Jahrhunderts wiederfindet.

Der Einfluss der Rhetorik verrät sich darin, dass die Bezeichnungen der Redefiguren metaphorisch verwandt werden können. Walter von Châtillon schildert im Eingang seiner *Alexandreis* (I, 59ff.) den durch seine Studien zu einem Skelett abgezehrten Aristoteles. Sein bleiches Gesicht verrät die Nachtarbeit; der Körper ist so abgemagert, dass die Haut ohne "Parenthese," d.h. ohne Zwischenraum, auf den Knochen liegt.

65 Nulla repellebat a pelle parenthesis ossa.

Quevedo nennt einen Buckligen

De paréntesis formado.[15]

Bei Góngora heissen Inseln "belaubte Parenthesen" in der Strömung eines Flusses,[16] bei Gracián ein Erdbeben paréntesis de mi vida.[17] Vor und nach 1200 wird es Mode, den Vogelgesang als Zitherspiel zu bezeichnen. Alanus nennt die Vögel

Syrenes memorum, citharistae veris

und hat damit Erfolg gehabt. Denn die Formeln olor citharizat, cignus citharizat, citharizat avis finden sich bei Walter Map, Petrus Riga, Johannes de Garlandia. Góngora wird schreiben:

Pintadas aves, cítaras de pluma;

Calderón:

El ave, que liberal
Vestir matices presuma,
Veloz cítara de pluma.

Eine dritte, eigenartige Metapher war im 12. Jahrhundert sehr beliebt: hydropicus im Sinne von "durstig." Abaelard:

Hydropico similis nemo est ut dives avarus.

Alanus von Lille:

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[14] Buecheler-Riese, *Anthologia latina*,[2] fasciculus II (1906), 174, Nr. 709.
[15] *Obras en verso*, ed. L. Astrana Marín, p. 157.
[16] Eunice Joiner Gates, *The Metaphors of Luis de Góngora* (1933), p. 92.
[17] *El Criticón*, ed. Romera-Navarro, I, 118.

Dum stomachum mentis hydropicat ardor habendi,
Mens potando sitit . . .

Walter von Châtillon:

Nam sicut ydropicus, qui semper arescit,
Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.

Und nun Góngora:

No en ti la ambición mora
Hidrópica de viento.

Calderón lässt in *La Vida es sueño* Segismundo zu Rosaura sagen:

Con cada vez que te veo
Nueva admiración me das,
Y cuando te miro más,
Aun más mirarte deseo:
Ojos hidrópicos creo
Que mis ojos deben ser . . .

Man vergleiche Donne (*Obsequies to the Lord Harrington*):

. . . . . calentures
Of hot ambitions, irreligions ice,
Zeales agues, and hydroptique avarice.

Drei Metaphern von extremem Seltenheitswert sind also der spanischen Dichtung des 17. und der lateinischen des 12. Jahrhunderts gemeinsam. Es gibt aber noch andere Gemeinsamkeiten. Ein von Caldrón bevorzugtes Stilmittel ist die Aufzählung, die mit einer Rekapitulation abschliesst, in welcher die Summe gezogen wird. Es findet sich im 4. Jahrundert bei Tiberianus, im 9. Jarhundret bei Walahfrid Strabo, 1527 bei Panfilo Sasso.[18] Wir können also vier charakterische Uebereinstimmungen zwischen lateinischem und spanischem Manierismus buchen. Wir können sie evident machen. Der Aufweis solcher Evidenzen bedeutet für die Philologie dasselbe wie der Beweis für die mathematischen Wissenschaften. Er gestattet Feststellungen, die dem Bereich der subjektiven Meinungen entzogen sind. Sie können verifiziert werden.

Kann man über dieses Ergebnis hinauskommen? Kann man die Uebereinstimmungen erklären? Erinnern wir uns an das Beispiel aus Berceo, mit dem wir begannen. Niemand wird wohl widersprechen, wenn wir sagen: in diesem Fall kann die Uebereinstimmung nur als Abhängigkeit erklärt werden. Wie war es mit den francesismos des Cid? Wollten wir hier Abhängigkeit des spanischen Epos von den chansons de geste annehmen, so wären wir mit Rücksicht auf die Chro-

[18] Vgl. meine Nachweise in *Modern Philology*, XXXVIII (1941), 325-333.

nologie genötigt, der gewichtigen Autorität eines Menéndez Pidal zu widersprechen. Man kann sich diesem Dilemma auf verschiedene Weise entziehen: man erklärt die Uebereinstimmungen für nicht beweisend oder für zufällig. Man gibt zu bedenken, dass die gleichen epischen Clichés unabhängig voneinander in Spanien und in Frankreich entstanden sein können. Die Uebereinstimmungen wären aus Polygenese zu erklären, nicht aus Wanderung.

Und der Konzeptismus des 17. Jahrhunderts? Heir ist zweierlei zu unterscheiden: Uebereinstimmung der Literaturtheorie and Uebereinstimmung von Techniken.

Wir haben den inneren Zusammenhang der Begriffe inventio, iudicium, ingenium, conceptus, acumen, cultus angedeutet. Sie entstammen teils einer rhetorischen Theorie, die von Cicero bis Martianus Capella, teils einer Poetik, die von Ovid bis Martial führt. Der oft behauptete wesensunterschied von Konzeptismus and Kultismus schwindet also bei historischer Betrachtung. Sie sind, wie Menéndez Pidal formuliert, estilos al fin y al cabo hermanos. Beide Lehren sind Aspekte desselben Systems.

Worin liegt nun aber das Wesentliche des Gongorismus? Weder in den gesuchten Metaphern noch in dem Anschluss an rhetorische Lehren der Kaiserzeit, sondern in der gewollten Dunkelheit. Ist sie nicht ein mit der lateinischen Tradition unvereinbares Element? Etwas spezifisch Modernes?

Menéndez Pidal hat der Dunkelheit Góngoras eine Untersuchung gewidmet.[19] Er knüpft an eine theoretische Aeusserung Góngoras an, die von hohem Interesse ist. In einem Brief[20] an einem uns nicht kenntlichen Kritiker der *Soledades* verteidigt Góngora die Dunkelheit. Er weist nach, sie sei nützlich para avivar el ingenio. Sie ist aber auch genussreich, weil das Suchen nach verborgener Wahrheit den Geist befriedigt: "Obligándole a la especulación por la obscuridad de la obra." In dieser Theorie der Dunkelheit sieht Menéndez Pidal das Neue an Góngora (lo ciertamente nuevo). Aber ist es so neu? In dem vorhergehenden Satz hatte Góngora Augustins inquietum est cor nostrum citiert. Bei dem Kirchenvater konnte er aber auch seine Theorie der Dunkelheit finden.[21] Die heilige Schrift, so lehrt Augustin, enthält Dunkelheiten, die von Gott gewollt sind, um unseren Geist zu üben ("in qua obscuritate proficere noster intellectus . . . exercitatione deberet"). Die Dunkelheit steigert aber auch den Wert der Wahrheit: facile investigata plerumque vilescunt. Das Enträtseln der verborgenen

[19] "Oscuridad, dificultad entre culteranos y conceptistas," in Menéndez Pidal, *Castilla, la tradición, el idioma*, 1945, p. 221ff.

[20] In der Ausgabe von Juan Millé y Giménez, p. 954ff.

[21] Das Folgende nach H.-J. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (1938), pp. 484-498.

Wahrheit ist genussreich ("cum aliqua difficultate quaesita multo gratius inveniri"). Durch Augustin sind diese Gedanken dem christlichen Abenlande tief eingeprägt worden. Sie lagen in der Luft, die Góngora einatmete. Sie harmonierten mit der allegorischen Deutung des Virgil und Ovid, die im Mittelalter und noch lange danach herrschte. Man konnte aber auch in klassischen Autoren Stellen finden, die sich wie eine Rechtfertigung dichterischer Dunkelheit lasen, selbst bei Cicero (*De divinatione*, II, 64,132).

Von Góngora ist das Wort überliefert: deseo hacer algo; no para los muchos.[22] Er knüpft an das alexandrinische und neoterische Ideal des poeta doctus an,[23] will von den Unwissenden nicht verstanden werden[24]. Den Seltenen bereitet er das Seltene. Auch das untergehende Römertum hat diese Stimmung gekannt[25] Man darf also doch wohl sagen, dass alle Elemente von Góngoras Literaturtheorie in der klassischen und nachklassichen Latinät enthalten sind. Góngora hat eine bewusste, produktive Synthese aus dieser Tradition geschaffen.

Wie werden wir aber die stilistischen Uebereinstimmungen zwischen spätantiker, mittelalterlicher und konzeptistischer Poesie beurteilen? Sind so auffallende Phänomene wie der metaphorische Gebrauch von parenthesis, citharizare, hydropicus und die summierende Aufzählung polygenetisch zu erklären? Das scheint ziemlich unwahrscheinlich. Wir müssen also Abhängigkeit annehmen. Wir kämen so zu der These: die Spanier des 17. Jahrhunderts haben die spätantiken Autoren und die des 12. Jahrhunderts gelesen[26] and nachgeahmt. Der Kultismus wäre also geschichtlich zu erklären als bewusste Wiederaufnahme einer spätlateinischen und mittellateinischen Stilmanier. Würde das einer heute geltenden Auffassung widersprechen wie unsere Vermutungen über die Datierung des *Cid?*

6. Literatur und Nationalcharakter

Zwei Ansichten über den Kultismus bestehen heute. Man erklärt ihn (a) aus der spanischen Wesensart; (b) aus dem Barockstil.

Gracián nennt seinen Landsmann Martial den "Erstgeborenen der agudeza." Agudeza zeichnet die Spanier aus wie Gelehrsamkeit die Franzosen, Eloquenz die Italiener, Erfindungsgabe die Griechen (Al Lector). Das Stilideal des Scharfsinns wird nationalpsychologisch ab-

[22] In dem Escrutinio eines Unbekannten. Bei Millé y Giménez, p. 1293.
[23] Seine Poesie ist entendida para los doctos. Millé y Giménez, p. 956.
[24] "Hacerme escuro a los ignorantes." *Ibid.*
[25] Apollinaris Sidonius, *Ep.*, II, 10, 6.
[26] Es sei nur erwähnt, das die *Alexandreis* des Walter von Châtillon 1513, 1541, 1558, 1659, 1693 gedruckt worden ist. Auch andere Werke des 12.Jahrhunderts haben im 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts wiederholte Auflagen gehabt.

geleitet, aber doch nur in Form eines Aperçu's. Die moderne Literaturwissenschaft nimmt für die Nationalphychologie eine grössere Tragweite in Anspruch. Viele Kritiker haben in der sociabilité einen Wesenszug der französischen Literatur gesehen. Realismus und Volkstümlichkeit werden oft als "typisch spanisch" betrachtet. Dámaso Alonso konnte jedoch zeigen, dass neben der Linie popularisimo-realismo-localismo eine andere einherläuft, die er selección-antirrealismo-universalidad nennt. Beide Komplexe sind für ihn polare Erscheinungsformen "einer einzigen hispanischen Substanz." Diese Correktur ist bedeutsam. Sind wir aber überhaupt berechtigt, den modernen Nationen einen in allen Epochen gleichbleibenden "Charakter" zuzuschreiben? Vor einem Jahrtausend hat kein einziges der Völker des heutigen Europa existiert.[27] Die Kontinuität der englischen, französischen, italienischen Wesensart durch die Jahrtausende hindurch (Camille Jullian wollte sie für Frankreich mit der Steinzeit beginnen lassen) ist ein Mythus, erklärbar nur aus den Nationalismen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts. Dasselbe gilt von Spanien. Es ist zwar dort seit Jahrhunderten üblich, die ibero-römischen Schriftsteller (die beiden Seneca, Lucan, Martial, Prudentius, etc.) der Nationalliteratur zuzurechnen, und Ganivet wollte im senequismo die erste Selbstebezeugung der spanischen Seele sehen. Aber die Hispania der Römer ist mit der España del Cid ebenso wenig identisch wie Caesars Gallia mit dem Frankreich der Kreuzzüge. Hispania ist ein geographischer und administrativer Begriff, das Spanien des Cid ist eine nationale Substanz. Sie ist erst durch die Absorption der Westgoten, durch die Symbiose mit dem Islam und die beginnende reconquista entstanden, wie Frankreich durch die Absorption der Normannen. Seneca, den Tacitus ein ingenium temporis eius auribus accomodatum nennt (*Annalen*, 13, 3) reflektiert den römischen Tagesgeschmack.[28] Und Lucan? Er schreibt ein Epos über den Bürgerkrieg, wobei er die traditionelle mythologische Maschinerie ausschaltet. Menéndez Pidal sieht darin den ersten Keim des Realismus, den er im *Poema del Cid*, in Cervantes und Goya wiederfindet.[29] Die Wahl eines zeitnahen historischen Stoffes ("buscar como asunto poemático los sucesos recientes que la poesía latina no le autorizaba") erscheint ihm als kühne Neurerung Lucans. Aber das zeitnahe historische Epos ist eine griechische Erfindung. Choirilos von Samos verfasse im letzten Drittel des fünften Jahrhunderts v. Chr. im Anschluss an Herodot Epen über die Perserkreige, weil ihm die alten epischen Sagenstoffe verbraucht erschienen. Seine Werke sind verloren, und wir wissen deshalb nicht, ob er von der Göttermaschinerie Ge-

[27] Toynbee, *A Study of History*, I (1934), 12.

[28] Son éducation est dominée par la rhétorique à la mode. René Pichon (*Histoire de la littérature latine*).

[29] *Introducción a la Historia de la España romana* (1935), p. xvi.

brauch machte. In Rom war ein zeitgeschichtliches Epos mit Verherrlichung des Augustus durch die historische Situation gefordert. Ovid, Horaz, Properz entschuldigen sich, dass sie es nicht liefern. Die Absicht der *Aeneis* ist nach Servius laudare Augustum a parentibus. In einer Uebersicht epischer Stoffe erwähnt Properz auch die Bürgerkriege (III, 9, 55ff.). Das geschichtliche Epos war also als Möglichkeit der lateinischen Poesie vor Lucan gegeben. Und wie steht es mit dem Realismus? Er hat Lucan jedenfalls nicht verhindert, den vergöttlichten Nero auf dem Himmelsgewölbe thronen zu lassen and die Mythologie durch Mantik und Magie zu ersetzen—das waren die Glaubensinhalte des römischen Publikums der Epoche. Lucan war noch kein Jahr alt, als er nach Rom kam. Wie Persius, dessen Poesie er enthusiastisch bewunderte, war er ein Schüler des afrikanischen Philosophen. Cornutus. Vor der Abfassung der *Pharsalia* hatte er griechische Sagenstoffe behandelt (*Ilias, Orpheus*). Man kann Lucan nicht auf die Hispanität reducieren.[30] Er und Seneca repräsentieren den Geschmack der neronischen Zeit. Unter den Flaviern finden wir dann eine Reaktion im klassizistischen Sinne. Auch sie wird von einem Spanier geführt: von Quintilian. Aber er ist ein Spanier ohne Manierismus. Es erscheint unmöglich, aus den römischen Schriftstellern iberischer Herkunft den Nachweis der hispanischen Continuität abzuleiten.

Der Glaube an einen invariablen Nationalcharakter impliciert aber ausserdem einen circulus vitiosus und ist schon aus diesem Grunde nicht annehmbar. Woher kennen wir den Charakter einer Nation? Wir lesen ihn ab aus ihren geistigen Schöpfungen. Das "Wesen" einer Nation wird aus der Literatur abgeleitet und in begriffliche Formeln gebracht. Dann werden die Begriffe hypostasiert und in dieser Form zur Interpretation der Literatur verwendet. Man holt den Nationalcharakter aus einer Schachtel heraus, in der man ihn vorher versteckt hatte. Für das Verständnis ist damit nichts geleistet.

Die spanische Literatur hat nicht deshalb den Konzeptismus erzeugt, weil der spanische Geist die Neigung zur agudeza hat, wie sich aus der Literatur ergibt. Eine solche Theorie erklärt nichts, sie ist eine Tautologie. Unter den Mustern der agudeza nennt Gracián Tacitus, Velleius Paterculus, Florus, Plinius, Apuleius, Ausonius, Ambrosius, Augustin (den "König der ingenios"), Petrus Chrysologus und viele andere, die keine Spanier sind. Die mittellateinischen Dichter, deren Metaphern wir bei den spanischen Manieristen wiederfanden, sind Franzosen (Alanus, Walter von Châtillon, Petrus Riga) oder Engländer (Johannes de Garlandia). Die spanische Substanz hat also nordische Elemente aufgenommen und assimiliert, wie sie sich an Formen und Stof-

[30] Für Martial ist sehr bezeichnend das Vorwort zu Buch XII der Epigramme. Er bekennt, dass er alles Rom verdanke.

fen der italienischen Renaissance bereichert hat. Die Continuität der spanischen Literatur ist nicht die eines invariablen Volkscharakters; es ist die einer literarischen Tradition, und zwar einer universalen Tradition, welche die ganze Latinität umfasst: die goldene, die silberne, die eherne und die eiserne; die heidnische und die der Kirchenväter, aber auch die der "Renaissance des 12. Jahrhunderts" (Haskins). Latein und Spanisch sind für Gracián die beiden "universalen" Sprachen, während Griechisch, Französisch, Italienisch usw. nur "partikular" sind. Auch Dámaso Alonso erkennt in der Universalität, wie wir sahen, ein Merkmal der "hispanischen Substanz."

7. *Französisches und spanisches Literatursystem*

Aber neben dieser spanischen Universalität steht die der französischen Klassik, die von ganz anderer Art ist. Ludwig XIV. hatte 1662 den Vortritt seiner Gesandten vor denen des spanischen Königs durchgesetzt. Damals geht auch der literarische Vorrang an Frankreich über. Ein französisches Literatursystem bildet sich heraus, das bis in das 20. Jahrhundert hinein den Anspruch auf Allgemeingültigkeit erhebt. Man darf es als System bezeichnen, insofern es eine nationale Ideologie ist. Ihre Normen sind niedergelegt in der Kritik von Boileau bis Sainte-Beuve. Thibaudet hat sie in folgenden Sätzen zusammengefasst:

La succession de trois littératures classiques, grecque, latine, française, les "Grands Siècles" qui s'y répondent, les liaisons qui s'y manifestent, les groupes qui s'y équilibrent, l'esprit de règle, de mesure et d'humanité qui y circule, tout ce qui tient pour nous dans le mot de classicisme, voilà le grand centre de la critique, la voie royale où elle voit s'avancer la littérature comme une procession bien ordonnée. C'est un point de vue que les étrangers ne comprennent qu'avec difficulté. Pour un Français il n'y a pas deux antiquités, il y en a trois, la grecque, la romaine, la française du XVII^e siécle . . . Cette chaine a été vécue par les artistes au XVII^e siècle; mais, lorsque le romantisme est venu la rompre, elle a continué a être pensée par la critique.[31]

Diese Doktrin ist ein Fundament der französischen Civilisationsidee. Als historiographisches Schema wirkt sie auch in der französischen Komparatistik. Bei Van Tieghem z.B. wird das Ablaufsschema Renaissance-Klassik-Präromantik-Romantik auf alle europäischen und amerikanischen Literaturen übertragen, auch wenn sie im 17. Jahrhundert keine Klassik erzeugt haben.[32] Calderón muss daher der Rennaissance zugerechnet werden, Goethe der Vorromantik. Eine solche Konstruktion tut offenbar der europäischen Literaturgeschichte Gewalt an. Die Blütezeit der englischen Literatur, die in Shakespeare gipfelt, lässt sich

[31] A. Thibaudet, *Physiologie de la Critique* (1930), pp. 194f.

[32] P. Van Tieghem, *Histoire littéraire de l'Europe et de l'Amérique de la Renaissance à nos jours* (1941).

nicht als Klassik bezeichnen und das Augustan Age des 18. Jahrhunderts ist ein silbernes, kein goldenes Zeitalter. Auch Spanien hat im 18. Jahrhundert eine klassizistische Epoche gehabt, aber das siglo de oro ist nicht klassisch im Sinne des französischen Literatursystems. Im Italien des 17. Jahrhunderts ist der Manierismus so vorherrschend, dass er dort secentismo heisst. Es wäre eine wichtige Aufgabe der vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte, den Entwicklungsgang der einzelnen Literaturen und ihre Selbstinterpretationen herauszuarbeiten. Was ich das französische Literatursystem nannte, ist eine solche Selbstinterpretation und d.h. eine Ideologie, die bewusst gemacht werden kann. Die Literaturvergleichung würde, wenn sie die bezeichnete Aufgabe ergreift, einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Analyse der modernen Nationalideologien leisten. Diese sind nicht weniger bedeutsam und wirksam als die Klassenideologien.

Wir hatten von dem spanischen Universalismus gesprochen, der sich in Gracián manifestiert und den Dámaso Alonso neu beleuchtet hat. Einen universalen Anspruch vertritt auch, wie wir sahen, das französische Literatursystem. Frankreich stellt seine Klassik der griechischen und römischen gleich. Aber es musste eigene Wertmasstäbe entwickeln, die französisch, nicht antik sind. Ideale wie raison, mesure, goût passen besser auf Racine und La Fontaine als auf Homer. "Nous ne sentons vraiment les œuvres latines et grecques, sagt Thibaudet, que dans une durée française." Die französische Klassik ist eine nationale Synthese der griechisch-lateinischen Tradition. Aber die antike Substanz ist auch in Spanien fruchtbar geworden. Dámaso Alonso hat den Gongorismus definiert als "síntesis española de la tradición poética grecolatina."[33]

Diese Formulierung ist als historische Interpretation ebenso überzeugend wie als ästhetische Würdigung. Aber sie ist mit dem französischen Literatursystem unvereinbar. Ein Triumph der französischen Klassik ist der Kampf gegen die Preziosität. Der Cultismus und Konzeptismus erscheinen, von Frankreich aus gesehen, als die spanische Form der Preziosität. Góngora, Gracián, Quevedo werden getadelt oder abgelehnt. Man sah in diesen Autoren Symptome einer Dekadenz.[34] Ernest Mérimée bedauert in seiner Geschichte der spanischen Literatur, dass sie "such severe schoolmasters as Malherbe, Vaugelas and the Academy" entbehren musste. In Gongorismus findet er "the

[33] *La lengua poética de Góngora* (1935), p. 220.

[34] Ein anonymer Kritiker erklärte den Gongorismus 1869 aus dem Obscurantismus der Gegenreformation: "Le despotisme le plus ombrageux pesait alors sur l'Espagne; la pensée y était interdite; le saint office avait mis sa redoutable organisation au service d'un pouvoir absolu . . . L'esprit, l'âme, la vie s'étaient retirés de tout écrit. Plus de grands sujets, de pensées profondes, d'élans vigoureux. Restaient le travail des mots, les thèmes puérils. La terreur religieuse enfante le cultisme" (Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX^e siècle*, V, 652).

most benign manifestation of a deep-seated disease," im Konzeptismus "the deep constitutional vice of Spain."[35] Solche Urteile besagen nichts anderes, als dass der Kritiker die Literatur eines fremden Volkes an den Masstäben der eigenen Literatur misst. Sie verschliessen den Weg zu historischem Verständnis. Das französische Literatursystem gleicht einer kirchlichen Dogmatik, die von kritischer Forschung nicht erschüttert ist. Es ist eine Orthodoxie, die ein fremdes ästhetisches Credo nicht oder doch nur in Form eines Compromisses anerkennen kann. So hat die Aufnahmne Dantes, Shakespeares, Goethes Sainte-Beuve Schwierigkeiten bereitet, als er den Kanon der Weltliteratur entwarf.

8. Schlussbemerkungen

Der Widerstreit zwischen dem spanischen und dem französischen Literatursystem, die sich beide mit Recht auf die griechisch-lateinische Tradition berufen, ist nur zu lösen, wenn man sich entschliesst, den Begriff des Klassischen zu revidieren. Die antike Literatur von Homer bis Claudian weist sehr verschiedene Stilperioden und Stilideale auf. Nur ein kleiner Ausschnitt davon ist "klassisch" im Sinne der französischen und der deutschen Klassik: die griechische Blütezeit von Sophokles bis Aristoteles, die römische von Cicero bis zum Abschluss der augusteischen Aera (Homer als zeitlose Gegenwart gehört keiner Stilepoche an). Unklassische, "modernistische" Stilideale treten im Hellenismus auf (Kallimachos), dann in der neronischen Epoche (Lucan, Statius). Als neutrale Bezeichnung für die unklassische Antike schlage ich "Manierismus" vor.[36] Die manieristische Antike ist die, welche das Mittelalter bevorzugt. Die lateinische Dichtung des 12. Jahrhunderts ist überwiegend von ihr inspiriert. Manierismus und Klassizismus durchdringen sich in Dante. Im 17. Jahrhundert setzt Spanien den manieristischen Stil fort, Frankreich den klassischen. England hat an beiden teil. Man würde das noch deutlicher sehen, wenn die Literaturgeschichte sich die Frage stellte: wie lebt das griechisch-römische Altertum in den Literaturen des modernen Europa fort? Für die französische Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts ist diese Frage noch nicht beantwortet worden. Für die englische Literatur haben wir jetzt das anregende Buch von J. A. K. Thomson, *The Classical Background of English Literature* (London, 1948). Den antiken Hintergrund—mag er nun "klassisch" oder manieristisch sein—der modernen Literaturen zu erforschen, wäre eine neue wichtige Aufgabe der Literaturvergleichung.

Bonn

[35] Mérimée-Morley, *A History of Spanish Literature* (1930), p. 232f. Ueber Mérimées *Essai sur Quevedo* (1886) sagt L. Astrana Marín: tesis doctoral llena de encono contra Quevedo y que podría incluirse en la sección de Investivas (Quevedo, *Obras en Verso*, 1932, p. 1433).

[36] Näheres in meinem Buch, pp. 275-303.

DANTE THROUGH THE CENTURIES

W. P. Friederich

ONE of the striking similarities and typical differences between Dante and Chaucer can be found in the episodes in the *Paradiso* and the *House of Fame,* when both poets, carried aloft into the spheres, look down upon the earth beneath them—haughty Dante smiling derisively as he glances at the pitiful smallness of the earth below, holding that man wisest who esteems it least; and Chaucer marveling with the naive eagerness of a child at beasts, hills, cities, and ships, all of them no bigger than a pin prick, as he exclaims. We, too, as we try to gain the proper perspective of Dante's literary significance during the past few centuries, soaring aloft in order to lose the maze of details and to catch sight of the broad lines and large facts only, may well share the sensations of our two poets, though the chances are that, like Chaucer, we may marvel at the beautiful coherence of what we behold rather than smile derisively, as Dante might, at the "smallness" of what, after all, was the very significant international fame of Italy's greatest poet.

The spiritual leadership of Dante, literary as well as political, has been uncontested throughout the ages except during the one hundred fifty years between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Italian humanists, Spanish Jesuits, and French neoclassicists alike tried to deny the literary and spiritual values for which he stood. The sudden drop in Dante's popularity is evident when we investigate the number of copies and editions of the *Divina Commedia* available: before the *editio princeps* was published at Foligno in 1472, there existed about 700 copies of Dante's masterpiece; during the last twenty-eight years of the fifteenth century the book went through 15 editions; the sixteenth century in Italy produced 30 editions, the seventeenth century only 3 editions, the eighteenth century 31 editions, the nineteenth century about 320 editions. The attacks against Dante began with the humanist Niccolò Niccoli in the fifteenth century (if not already with Petrarch) and reached an apex during the last years of the sixteenth century with Salviati, Bulgarini, and others; the last great vilifier of the *Divina Commedia* was the Jesuit Bettinelli, a neoclassical *bel esprit* and a disciple of Voltaire, in his *Lettere virgiliane* of 1758.

Generally speaking, we can state that, among foreign literatures, England shows the best evidence of a more or less continuous knowledge and appreciation of Dante—as is proved by the names of Chaucer, Milton, and Shelley. Other countries do not show that same steady line; in France, for instance, though Dante achieved some fame prior to 1550 and after 1800, he remained completely unappreciated by the generations from Ronsard to Voltaire. In Germany Dante, the antipapal polemicist, rather than the poet, was known before 1750; later, however, from A. W. Schlegel to Stefan George, the Germans never tired of extolling him at home and abroad. Spain presents the strange picture of the earliest and greatest appreciation of the *Divina Commedia* with Santillana, Mena, and Rocaberti in the fifteenth century; but later, with the possible exception of Quevedo early in the seventeenth century, Dante was completely neglected. Not even the great romantic revival seems to have evoked any distinct echo in his fellow-Latins and fellow-Catholics of the Iberian peninsula. Swiss interest in Dante extends from the first printing of *De Monarchia* in Basel in 1559 through Bodmer, Madame de Staël, and Sismondi to Jakob Burckhardt and to Scartazzini. America's love of Dante reached a somewhat sudden and puzzling apex with Emerson, Parsons, Longfellow, Lowell, and Norton.

The growing number of translations of the *Divina Commedia* and of Dante's other works best indicates the slow but steady spread of his fame. The first two translations of the epic were made into Latin, one by Matteo Ronto, a Benedictine monk, the other by the Bishop Giovanni da Serravalle who, during the Council of Constance, lectured on Dante and, at the instigation of two English colleagues, translated the *Commedia* in 1417. The next two translations were made in Spain: one, of mediocre quality, done into Castilian prose by Don Enrique de Aragón, Señor de Villena, in 1428; the other, of superior workmanship, done into Catalan *terza rima* by Andreu Febrer in 1429. In connection with Spain we should also mention the translation of the *Inferno* by Pedro Fernández de Villegas in 1515, for it was the first translation from the *Divina Commedia* printed anywhere in Europe. France came next: she could boast of an anonymous translation of the *Inferno* done around 1500, a translation of the *Paradiso* by François Bergaigne around 1520, and an anonymous translation of the entire epic around 1550. However, none of these translations was published till late in the nineteenth century; the first French translation of the entire *Commedia* actually to be printed was that of Balthazard Grangier, which appeared in 1596. Protestant Switzerland came next, not with a translation of the *Commedia*, for the poet Dante was hardly known north of the Alps, but characteristically enough with *De Monarchia*. The publi-

cation of this staunchly pro-Ghibelline book had not yet been allowed, through Marsilio Ficino had translated it into Italian as early as 1467. Hence the double stroke in Basel in the year 1559, which witnessed the *editio princeps* of its original Latin text and at the same time its translation into German by Johannes Herold Basilius. After that came the great period of anti-Dantesque activity. But in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the growing preromantic love of Dante created a more propitious atmosphere, both Germany and England, after lagging for centuries behind Spain and France, were at last ready for their first translations of the *Divina Commedia*. Germany achieved this in 1767-69, with the unsatisfactory translation of the entire *Commedia* by Leberecht Bachenschwanz. England came last: Charles Rogers published his very mediocre version of the *Inferno* in 1782; Henry Boyd, between 1785 and 1802, was the first to publish an English translation of the entire *Commedia*. This was soon to be followed by the translation of Henry Francis Cary, still perhaps the best-known English translator of Dante. America's first translation of the entire *Commedia* was published by Longfellow, between 1865 and 1867.

The nineteenth century saw also the first translations of Dante's minor works. The first German version of the *Vita Nuova*, by Oeynhausen, appeared in 1824; the first French rendering of the same work was made by Delécluze and published in 1841; the first English translation (apart from Emerson's unpublished manuscript translation of the *Vita Nuova* in 1842) by Garrow appeared in Florence in 1846. With regard to translations of Dante's complete works, two men should be mentioned above all: Kannegiesser in Germany, who began with his version of the *Commedia* in 1809, went on to Dante's *Lyrische Gedichte* in 1827, and to the *Prosaische Schriften* in 1845; in France Sébastien Rhéal's *Œuvres complètes de Dante*, publication of which was begun in 1843, contained the first French translation of *De Monarchia*.

The first European Dante bibliographies were published in Dresden in 1844 by Petzhold, the librarian of King John of Saxony, and in Florence in 1846 by Colomb de Batines. The first man to investigate Dante's fame in Europe was Saint-René Taillandier who, in 1856, published his comparative study, *Dante Alighieri et la littérature dantesque en Europe*.

Another way of tracing Dante's tremendous influence upon Europe is to survey the important works directly inspired by him. Such works either show Dante personally as a leading character, as do Francisco Imperial's *Decir de las siete virtudes* written in Spain around 1400, Byron's *Prophecy of Dante*, Bornier's drama, *Dante et Béatrice*, and Victor Hugo's *La vision de Dante*; or they show one of the characters contained in the *Divina Commedia* forming the center of a new piece

of literature, e.g., Semproni's and Gerstenberg's dramas, *Ugolino,* Taillandier's *Béatrice,* Hunt's *Story of Rimini,* and the many other reworkings of the immortal tale of Francesca and Paolo, such as the dramas by the Swiss Keller, the Germans Uhland and Heyse, the Italian Pellico, and the American Boker. In a way Browning's *Sordello,* as well as Tennyson's *Ulysses,* can also be included among these Dante imitations. The number of ambitious epics, written in a more or less Dantesque fashion and dealing with the problem of man's destiny and salvation, or with pilgrimages into the beyond, has been almost legion—though we must beware of overemphasizing Dante's contributions in every case. Beginning in fifteenth-century Spain, with Metge's *Sompni* and Rocaberti's *Comedia de Gloria de Amor* in Catalonia, and with Santillana's *Infierno de los Enamorados* and Juan de Mena's *Labyrintho* in Castile, and extending through the seventeenth century with Quevedo's *Los Sueños* and Milton's *Paradise Lost,* these epics became particularly frequent during the age of French romanticism, e.g., Lemercier's *Panhypocrisiade,* Vigny's *Eloa,* Soumet's *La Divine Epopée,* and Lamartine's *La Chute d'un ange.*

Art also was greatly inspired by Dante's masterpiece—from Botticelli's illustrations in the 1481 edition of the *Commedia* to Sir Joshua Reynold's famous painting of "Ugolino" in 1773, and from the paintings of Dante, Virgil, Beatrice, and Francesca by Jean Ingres, Eugène Delacroix, and Ary Scheffer in the 1820s in France to the work of Germans like Cornelius, Veit, and Feuerbach, Austrians like Koch, and Swiss artists like Böcklin. Most important were, of course, the various illustrations of the *Divina Commedia,* by Blake and Flaxman and the Anglo-Swiss Fuseli in England, by Vogelstein in Germany, and by Gustave Doré in France, who surpassed them all in popularity. Even German musical composers like Wagner were deeply influenced by Dante; the best-known work produced in that field undoubtedly was Liszt's *Dantesinfonie* of 1855.

Let us now follow Dante through the centuries in more systematic fashion and investigate the possible reasons for the increase or decline of his fame at a particular moment. We realize, for example, that any of the great allegorical poems of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—Petrarch's *Trionfi,* Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione,* Chaucer's *House of Fame,* or Padilla's *Los doce triunfos de los doce Apóstoles*— might easily have drawn upon the vast stores of allegorical material pro- ism was of native mediæval inspiration, how much was due to the vided by Dante. The problem arises, though, how much of this allegor- influence of Jean de Meung's *Roman de la Rose,* and how much was due to Dante. It is especially in connection with such Spanish authors of the fifteenth century as Imperial, Santillana, and Mena that a scholarly feud has broken out among modern critics over the significance

and degree of Dante's influence upon Spain. Christine de Pisan in her *Chemin de long estude* was among the first to imitate Dante in France and to declare the *Commedia* to be far superior to the *Roman de la Rose*. Occasionally Dante would find his way alone and untranslated into foreign countries, into the library of the Duque de Santillana in Spain or into that of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester in England; sometimes, however, he would become known indirectly, as, for instance, through the passage devoted to him in Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* and through the French translation made of that work by Laurent de Premierfait and the English version contained in John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*.

The decline of Dante's fame after 1500 was due to many reasons. The men of the Renaissance, the humanists, the neoclassicists, the courtiers, chose to seen in Dante only the poet of the past, of the dark Middle Ages, of religious visions that did not conform with the laws of verisimilitude, of grotesque and at times hideous descriptions that fell far short of the new concepts of æstheticism, the staunch Ghibelline defender of an imperial idea that had long since become a mere chimera, the austere representative of a severe Christian morality that seemed out of place in the sensuous age of Ariosto and Aretino. These men of the sixteenth century did not see in Dante an essentially modern man, a poet who with his compact style and his symmetrical constructions was a forerunner of classicism, an individual who in the intensity of his passions and in the many-sidedness of his talents was as universal as any Leonardo da Vinci; instead, they felt uncomfortable about his gloom and preferred the lighter fare of Bembo, Castiglione, or Tasso. To this must be added the important fact that Dante's amorous verses were not generally known during this century of gallant Petrarchism; his *Vita Nuova* was one of his last works to be printed, as late as 1576, and then it was badly mauled by inquisitorial censorship. For this reason the Garcilaso de la Vegas and the Boscáns, the Ronsards and the du Bellays, the Sidneys and the Spensers, had Petrarch's poems to Laura, but not Dante's poems to Beatrice, to inspire them. Michelangelo Buonarroti and Marguerite de Navarre were the only two significant poets of the early sixteenth century to be inspired by Dante.

An additional reason for the growing disfavor of Dante in Catholic countries was the suspicious eagerness with which the Protestants of Europe seized upon *De Monarchia*, declaring it to be the book of a forerunner of Luther. Matthias Flaccius Illyricus in his *Catalogus testium veritatis qui ante nostram aetatem pontifici romano et papismi erroribus reclamarunt* and Petrus Paulus Vergerius in his *Catalogus haereticorum*, both works of 1556, were the first to claim Dante for the Protestant cause. They were supported in their efforts, as we have seen, by the publication of the *editio princeps* and also of the first Ger-

man translation of *De Monarchia* in the Protestant stronghold of Basel in 1559, and by such additional polemical writings as François Perrot's *Aviso piacevole dato alla Bella Italia,* printed in 1586, probably in Geneva. The Catholic Church retaliated by putting *De Monarchia* on the *Index Librorum prohibitorum* in 1564 and parts of the *Divina Commedia* and of Landino's *Commentary* in 1581. It was due to this essentially Jesuit drive against Dante that the poet, so popular among the authors of fifteenth-century Spain, now more or less completely disappeared from Spanish cultural life. For more than 300 years, it appears, God-fearing Catholics were afraid to touch such an unorthodox book. Even the third Latin translation of the *Commedia,* published in 1728 by the Jesuit Carlo d'Aquino, still showed the effects of this ban by its omission of all controversial passages. The famous Jesuit, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, was the only exception to this otherwise uniform trend; for in his *De Controversiis christianae fidei,* written in 1592 and published in 1613, he at last claimed Dante again for the Catholic camp, where he properly belonged. Cardinal Bellarmine denied that Dante had attacked all popes (we meet only six in the *Inferno*); that the mysterious Veltro of *Inferno* I, the harbinger of freedom, was an allusion to Luther (and that the word Veltro itself was an anagram of Lutero); that the great prostitute in *Inferno* XIX referred to the Church of Rome; that the mysterious passage about the *cinquecento dieci e cinque* in *Purgatorio* XXXIII was a fairly accurate prophecy of the date of the beginning of Luther's activity (1517); and that the Roman number for 515, DXV, was an anagrammed form of Dux, another allusion to Luther.

In the seventeenth century Quevedo, with his grotesque *Los Sueños* of 1627, and Milton, with *Paradise Lost,* were the only outstanding disciples of Dante in an otherwise utterly unappreciative age. Each poet gives striking evidence of the deep imprint the genius of Dante had left upon him. But everywhere else we note a practically complete silence. Such leading figures as Corneille, Boileau, and Racine do not even allude to Dante. It is almost a matter for gratitude to find Voltaire in the eighteenth century launching his great attacks against Dante, for anything was better than this deadly silence; and Voltaire, like Mephistopheles who wills the bad and yet creates the good, by his very attacks against Dante, Milton, and Shakespeare at least gave these poets the necessary amount of attention out of which a few years later there grew the great romantic love for these irregular geniuses. It is not necessary here to repeat Voltaire's objections to these "bizarre" writers; he was simply aware that as the last great defender of classicism he had to hold the line against the highly debatable type of literature favored by the preromanticists. Hence the acerbity with which he, along with Bettinelli in Italy and Andrés in Spain, attacked

Dante; indeed, echoes of their criticism—the recurrent objections of all rationalists against the *Divina Commedia*—can be found even in the nineteenth century in Lamartine and Landor.

With the coming of preromanticism, the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* were hardly ever alluded to; for Dante became especially famous as the author of the *Inferno*, the creator of horrible, gruesome, and weird scenes. Of the two most popular topics of the *Inferno*, the stories of Ugolino and of Francesca, the ferocity of the former was for a long time far more acclaimed than the pathetic tenderness of the latter. In Switzerland, Bodmer at Zürich was the first man in German-speaking lands to proclaim that Dante was not only a theologian, the author of *De Monarchia*, and an alleged forerunner of Luther, as the Germans hitherto had believed, but that, much more important, Dante was also a poet, an original genius, the author of the *Divina Commedia*. Bodmer's own mediocre treatment of Ugolino in *Der Hungerturm von Pisa* indicated precisely what aspects of Dante he found to be most impressive. In England the Ugolino episode was a popular subject for translation—by Jonathan Richardson in 1719, by Thomas Gray, by Thomas Warton, and by the Earl of Carlisle. The same was true in France, with the Ugolino translations of Watelet, Marmontel, and Lebeau (who translated this episode into Latin), and with the startling innovation of the well-known Shakespeare adapter, Jean-François Ducis, whose version of *Roméo et Juliette* (1772) brought in the story of Ugolino by having the old Montaigu and his sons experience the same sufferings and horrible death as Dante's hero. But France soon went beyond this stage and began to investigate the entire figure and work of Dante —witness the biographies by Michel de Chabanon in 1773, by Moutonnet de Clairfons in 1776, and by Le Prévost d'Exmes in 1787.

Germany, however, took the lead in the romantic discovery of Dante. The very important pioneering essays and translations by A. W. Schlegel were followed by the philosopher Schelling's no less important essay, *Ueber Dante in philosophischer Beziehung*. The aged Goethe abandoned his Hellenistic aversion to the gloominess and grotesqueness occasionally found in Dante and made beautiful use of the *Paradiso* in the ending of *Faust;* possibly he also made use of the *Vita Nuova* in his touching *Marienbader Elegie*. From 1824 on appeared the great works of German scholarship dealing with Dante. Karl Witte, greatest among these scholars, was ably supported by such men as Blanc, Abeken, Schlosser, Göschel, and Wegele. Among the host of Dante's translators in Germany special mention should be made of King John of Saxony who, under the pen name of Philalethes, made what is sometimes called the best German translation of the *Divina Commedia*—like Cary's, in blank verse—and who, together with Witte, was instrumental in establishing the German Dante Society in 1865.

Poets, from Uhland, Brentano, Werner, and Waiblinger to Stefan George, frequently manifested their admiration of Dante; among the philosophers, mention should be made of Hegel, whose Dante criticism deeply influenced De Sanctis, and of Schopenhauer, many of whose bitter and derisively anti-Christian statements were called forth by the *Divina Commedia.* Switzerland followed, ever aware of her important role as a mediator among nations. Madame de Staël, in *Corinne,* was one of the first to point out to classical-minded France the beauties of Italian culture, and particularly of Dante; Sismondi emulated her in his *Histoire des républiques italiennes au moyen âge,* no less than in *De la littérature du Midi de l'Europe;* and Jakob Burckhardt's epoch-making *Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860) would not have been complete without a thorough appraisal of Dante. Among Swiss poets dealing with Dante was Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, author of *Die Hochzeit des Mönchs*; among Swiss scholars towards the end of the nineteenth century was Scartazzini, one of the very best Dante specialists in the whole of Europe.

In France, mention should be made of Antoni Deschamps, a foremost Dante enthusiast of the romantic school, and, above all, of two beautiful and internationally famous books, Frédéric Ozanam's *Dante et la philosophie catholique au treizième siècle* and Jean-Jacques Ampère's *Le Voyage dantesque,* both published in 1839. Nor should we omit the fact that, besides Ozanam, a second great Catholic thinker, Lamennais, busied himself with Dante, claiming him anew for the cause of Catholicism, as Bellarmine had done; his translation of the *Commedia* appeared posthumously, in 1855. Together with the Swiss Madame de Staël, the Englishman Byron, and the German Heine, Victor Hugo, after 1852, occasionally liked to compare himself to the proud and defiant Dante, exiled by the vicissitudes of political life, alone, suffering, yet haughty. Although Hugo has often been accused of imperfectly understanding Dante, there is no denying that in 1865, for the great international celebration of Dante's anniversary, he addressed to the city of Florence a most beautiful letter which was at once a glorification of Italy and a great eulogy of Dante. As for England, there too we discover a fascinating outburst of enthusiasm for Dante, beginning perhaps with Coleridge's celebrated address on Dante in 1818, which, overnight, helped to increase the popularity of Cary's hitherto neglected translation. Byron was full of Dante, with whom he liked to think he had much in common; more important perhaps than his *Prophecy of Dante,* his experimentation with *terza rima,* and his borrowings from Dante in *Don Juan,* is the fact that he translated the episode of Francesca da Rimini, thereby at long last pointing to a gentler and more sympathetic side in Dante's character and work. One of the most significant of all English Dante enthusiasts was Shelley, who, in his various

translations and discussions and above all in *Prometheus Unbound* and *Epipsychidion,* showed a belated but intense appreciation of the *Vita Nuova* and the *Paradiso.* We can also point to Arthur Hallam's fine intuitive understanding of Dante, to Macaulay's eulogy of the *Commedia* and comparison with *Paradise Lost,* to Carlyle's celebrated essay on *The Hero as Poet,* to Tennyson's echoes in *Ulysses* and *In Memoriam,* to Robert Browning's *Sordello* and his use of the *Vita Nuova* in *One Word More,* and, towards the end of the nineteenth century, to the devotion to Dante of men like Church, Plumptre, and Gladstone.

A decisive factor in this growing appreciation of Dante was the significant pioneering role played by Italians living abroad. Young America after 1805 had Lorenzo da Ponte, an enthusiastic teacher of Italian in New York, who gave America its first glimpse of the greatness of Italian literature, and particularly of Dante. France had a naturalized former citizen of Florence who, in 1840, under the name of Pier-Angelo Fiorentino, published a good prose translation of the *Divina Commedia,* which found favor even in the critical eyes of Lamartine. But the most militant Italians lived in England where, from the middle of the eighteenth century on, they lustily joined in the great battle against Voltaire and in defense of Dante and Shakespeare. More important than Paolo Rolli and Vincenzio Martinelli was Giuseppe Baretti, a fiery defender of Italy who, in his *Dissertation upon the Italian Poetry* of 1753 as well as in his *Discours sur Shakespeare* of 1777, was an inveterate enemy of Voltaire and a wholehearted admirer of Dante. While Gozzi, Alfieri, and Leopardi at home completely undid the evil effects of Bettinelli's criticism of Dante, Foscolo carried on the fight in England during the last eleven years of his life, publishing two articles in the *Edinburgh Review* in behalf of Dante and of Cary, and beginning a four-volume edition of the *Divina Commedia* which, after his death in 1827, was finished by his fellow exile Mazzini. Mazzini, too, spoke of Dante in two articles, in the *Westminster Review* in 1837 and the *Foreign Quarterly Review* in 1844. A third Italian in England, Antonio Panizzi, deserves mention because he helped Lord Vernon in the preparation and the publication of the important *Le prime quattro edizioni della Divina Commedia* of 1858. And, finally, there were the three gifted Rossetti children: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the painter of "Dante's Dream" and the author of *Dante at Verona* and of *Dante and his Circle* (1861), the latter containing a new translation of the *Vita Nuova;* William Michael Rossetti, translator of the *Inferno* (1865); and Maria Francesca Rossetti, author of *The Shadow of Dante* (1871).

The reference to the three Rossettis brings us to the elder Rossetti and to his fascinatingly absurd theories about Dante. There have been three chief attempts made in the course of recent centuries to misrepre-

sent Dante and all he stood for. The first, as we have seen, was undertaken by the Protestants of the sixteenth century, who claimed Dante as a forerunner of Luther. The second attempt was made in 1727 by the Jesuit Jean Hardouin in an essay, *Doutes proposés sur l'âge de Dante,* in which he tried to do to Dante what the Baconians later attempted with regard to Shakespeare, i.e., to prove that Dante had never really written his epic and that the *Commedia* had in truth been composed early in the fifteenth century by a follower of John Wyclif, who then published it under the name of the famous Florentine exile. The third and most serious attempt to alter the picture and the interpretation of Dante was undertaken by Gabriele Rossetti in a series of books, especially in his rather notorious *Sullo spirito antipapale che produsse la Riforma* (London, 1832), in which he tried to exclude Dante from the community of the Catholic Church and to brand him as a heretic and conspirator whose many mysterious passages in the *Divina Commedia* and elsewhere contained, in secret code, messages addressed to a subversive international organization which aimed at the overthrow of the Church of Rome. Outstanding among Rossetti's English supporters were Caroline Ward, who translated his book under the title, *Disquisitions on the Antipapal Spirit which Produced the Reformation* (1834), and Charles Lyell, the first translator of Dante's *Canzioniere* (1835), who complemented Rossetti's statements by publishing a new edition of Hardouin's *Doutes proposés sur l'âge de Dante* (1847). However, the greatest support came to Rossetti from the Frenchman Eugène Aroux who, in 1854, published a book dedicated to Pope Pius IX and written to "faire ressortir la vérité au milieu des ténèbres," called *Dante hérétique, révolutionnaire et socialiste: Révélations d'un catholique sur le Moyen Age*; this was followed by such essays as *L'Hérésie de Dante démontrée par Françoise de Rimini* and a complete rewriting of his earlier annotated translation of the *Divina Commedia* in the light of his and Rossetti's new discoveries. Needless to say, the ideas of both these men were most emphatically rejected by Dantists like Schlegel, Witte, Cary, Hallam, Taillandier, and others.

In conclusion, a word about Dante in America. We might have expected Poe to have read Dante, or Irving or Hawthorne to have acquired some knowledge of him during their stays in Italy; but it is certainly surprising that Dante should have become the very center of interest of the descendants of New England Puritanism, that Emerson should have been the first to translate the entire *Vita Nuova* into the English tongue in 1842; that one year later he should have been followed by the fastidious Thomas William Parsons, the translator of the *Inferno* and of about half of the *Purgatorio;* that one of the very best of Longfellow's many good works in his self-appointed task of serving as a mediator between European and American culture should be his

beautiful translation of the entire *Commedia,* which began to appear in 1865, the six-hundredth anniversary of Dante's birth, and to which he prefixed six justly admired sonnets on Dante; that Lowell, beginning in 1859, should have written a fine and appreciative essay on Dante which is widely hailed as one of the best; that Norton, in 1867, should have published his translation of the *Vita Nuova,* to be followed, in 1891, by his *magnum opus,* a new translation of the *Commedia;* and that in 1880 there should have been established, in Cambridge, the Dante Society of America. All this intense activity is truly astonishing, for it indicates that Dante, like no other European poet, for decade on decade occupied the very best minds of New England. The fact that Dante was Catholic and that the New Englanders were Protestant did not matter; we might even emphasize that, in contrast to German romanticism, many of whose poets felt attracted to the Catholic Church, New England romanticism remained Protestant to its very core. There must have been a reason why the Longfellows, the Lowells, the Parsons, the Nortons, and the Emersons granted Dante such a very large place in their hearts, their minds, and their libraries—a place so large that Scartazzini some fifty years ago hailed America as "la nuova Ravenna del grande poeta." It must have been because, across the barriers of language, time, space, and religion, these Bostonians saw in Dante a portion of themselves: the disciplined Puritan, the austere scholar, the very incarnation of Christian civilization.[1]

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[1] Rather than clutter this rapid survey with notes, I should like to refer to the ample bibliography contained in three of my recent articles: "Switzerland's Contribution to the International Appreciation of Dante Alighieri," *Studies in Philology,* XLII (1945); "The Unsolved Problem of Dante's Influence in Spain, 1515-1865," *Hispanic Review,* XIV (1946); and "Dante's Fame Among the Poets and Philosophers of Germany, 1800-1865," *Philological Quarterly,* XXV (1946).

OMERO E IL RINASCIMENTO ITALIANO

GIUSEPPE TOFFANIN

NELLA storia d'Italia il momento più ricco di significati universali e di fascino è pur sempre il Rinascimento; nelle cui prospettive però, il secolo scorso ha lasciato irrompere deformante la passione del Romanticismo.

Gli studi recenti, come hanno rimesso ordine in molte idee confuse, così ne hanno eliminate alcune di arbitrarie; e a nessuno più oggi, sulla scorta del vecchio Burckhardt, piacerebbe rappresentare gli umanisti come privi di ogni idea madre, devoti agli antichi solo per un entusiasmo estetismo (ma disposto, ahimè, a sottovalutare gli stessi artisti delle arti

Oggi si sa che, se mai, c'è più verità nel contrario. Sul loro così detto estetismo (ma disposto, ahimè, a sottovalutare gli stessi artisti delle arti figurative per amore del Verbo) le riserve sarebbero molto più facili che sulla loro religiosa reverenza ai valori etici tramandati dagli antichi come inseparabili dal messaggio cristiano. Per gli umanisti insomma, i divini antichi, poeti, storici, moralisti, furono amati come demiurgici fra l'Eterno ed il Tempo; e perciò il Cristianesimo non li annullava o diminuiva ma confermava e consacrava. Tutti i divini antichi? Tutti, sebbene in diversa misura e purchè si escludano dalla loro cerchia, s'intende, gli "halucinantes philosophi" dell'antica Grecia. Di qui la ragione per cui gli uomini di pensiero del Rinascimento, anche se estranei alla filosofia in senso stretto, o devoti ad Aristotile nella recente riabilitazione tomistica, sempre e in blocco poterono dirsi platonici, essendo stato comune a tutti il riconoscimento che la prestabilita armonia di Sapienza e Verità attingeva il suo apogeo nell'epopea socratica di Platone.

Ma dopo Platone, a quale fra i divini antichi venne più fervido da parte degli umanisti il riconoscimento demiurgico? A Omero! Anzi l'idea che il poeta e il filosofo rappresentino come i dioscuri della Verità primordiale e il secondo dipenda in qualcosa dal primo, è come il leitmotif di tutto il Rinascimento che si riassume alla fine nelle parole del grande umanista in prescrizione, il Vico: "Gli omerici platonizzavano e i platonici omerizzavano."

Senonchè, a differenziare il caso del poeta dal caso del filosofo basta un minimo di riflessione. Non per nulla la storia della cristianizzazione di Platone è oggi tutta in risalto, coincide con quella dell'umanesimo; e neppure lo spirito critico del romanticismo potè poi cogliervi contrad-

dizioni sostanziali o paradossi; ma la cristianizzazione di Omero si arenò alle prime sabbie pre-illuministiche tra i sarcasmi e gli sdegni per i sacrifici umani al c. XXI dell'*Iliade*; nè oggi è facile ricostruirne la storia perchè costituita di elementi più sentimentali che razionali.

Tuttavia, come anche quella storia esiste, così queste pagine vogliono rappresentare un contributo alla sua ricostruzione (fin qui non ancora fatta) e costituire une specie di appendice alla mia *Storia dell'Umanesimo* e alla *Storia del Logos*. E si vedrà di quanti elementi romantici e mistici era poi sfumata, nel suo momento trionfale, la stessa idea classica.

In realtà dipese specialmente dal fascino religioso di Omero se, fin dalla prima reazione al positivismo duecentesco negli albori dell'Umanesimo, la lingua di Atene, segreto di pochissimo allora, si presentò agli ignari come un segreto di Dio, e per apprenderla e compitar poi sull'*Iliade*, un Petrarca e un Boccaccio si addattarono a sedere in veste di discepoli, accanto a grecizzanti oscuri e probabilmente poco dotti.

Cosí scaturì la religione di Omero; chi ne possedeva il codice lo conservava tra le cose più care come il Traversari ci racconta di Vittorino da Feltre; chi non poteva altro cercava di suscitare nel cuore dei competenti la fiamma sacra del fervor traduttivo come Coluccio Salutati con Antonio Loschi.

> O te felice—gli scriveva quasi biblicamente—se ti assumerai tale impresa e se darai anche soltanto un libro e lo farai: e lo farai se lo vuoi. So che non si può dare o destare per opera umana il fuoco pieno e la dottrina poetica ma che essi sono ispirati dall'altissima divinità e che nascono insieme con noi per natura, sono nutriti fin dai primi trastulli con cui giuochiamo appena nati.

In realtà al futuro traduttore di Omero si pensava come al personaggio della quarta ecloga virgiliana; e un po' nel riflesso di un presagio fu preso alla rustica casa nativa e portato al palagio mediceo un fanciullo che veramente si chiamò Poliziano, e, se non contribuì proprio alla grandezza di Dio e alla salvezza del genere umano traducendo tutto Omero, di quel primo misticismo rimase e rimane e rimarrà avvolto almeno finché gli duri il nome che gli procurarono le prime esperienze latine sul greco poema divino: "omerico giovinetto."

Finchè gli duri, dico, perchè, in cospetto ai maggiori personaggi del Rinascimento la cultura del secolo scorso parve non proporsi altro fine che questo: disambientarli. E noi oggi abbiamo quasi dimenticato che quando i riti e le opere, la filosofia e la teologia dell'Accademia platonica, furono tutti nell'armonizzare la prerivelazione dei libri profani e la cristiana rivelazione di Dio, Omero divenne quasi il corollario di Platone, e gli omerici platonizzarono e i platonici omerizzarono; e Pico della Mirandola seppe guardare Ulisse a specchio dei veri più arcani e il Landino e il Beniviene pensarono a Dante come all' "Omero cristiano," non per un omaggio alla retorica, ma per una analogia veramente intravista

tra il messaggio dell'antico e l'allegoria del moderno; e il Poliziano a glorificare in Omero l'idea umanistica consacrò la più bella, la più commossa, la più alta delle sue *Selve*.

> Tutto che l'antichità sapiente ci ha tramandato, tutto promana da lui—scriveva il Poliziano—Omero insegna che c'è un Dio, pensiero infinito, signore di tutte le cose, che tutto abbraccia, che governa con stabile legge la natura e le vicende del mondo, che sottomette i fati al libero arbitrio, che solo regola ogni cosa; insegna che le anime sono immortali . . . colloca la ragione come signora nella parte più alta del corpo, agita nel petto la triste ira condannando la degenere cupidigia . . . indica qual'è la meta del sommo bene, quale orbita segue il giusto camino, dove va a confondersi un traviamento che si sposta dalla retta via, quanto la fortuna governa le cose caduche . . .

Negli umanisti questo sentimento platonico di Omero si potrebbe documentare fino alla sazietà. Alcuni anni fa, per esempio, uno studioso, Ernst Ditt, mettendo le mani tra gli inediti dell'umanista pavese Pier Paolo Decembrio (1399-1477) scoperse, o piuttosto riprese in esame, nei vari codici in cui ci è giunta, una *Vita Homeri*, certe pagine della quale potrebbero rappresentare il commento più calzante al verso dantesco:

> Questi è Omero poeta sovrano

e anche alla famosa lode a Virgilio:

> Tu se' solo colui dal quale io tolsi
> lo bello stile che m'ha fatto onore,

almeno in quanto di contraddittorio le due lodi possono contenere e nel fatto che poi Dante in realtà non dipende nè dall'uno nè dall'altro.

Probabilmente Dante voleva dire esattamente come dirà poi il Decembrio che non si è virgiliani senza essere anche omerici "che ogni tesoro veramente poetico pervenutoci è dovuto in ultima analisi ad Omero." "Mihi autem si quid a poetis memoria dignum perscriptum est, id omne ab Omero sumptum videtur. Nam Virgilii poema nihil habet quod ab huius stilo et ordine discedat, pluribus etiam locis non imitatur sententias dumtaxat, sed refert."

Il fatto sta che il Decembrio va a ricercare in Omero quelle stesse interferenze con la Bibbia che i platonici cercavano in Platone, e trovandole, le riconosce illuminate dalla stessa luce di prerivelazione che splende sulle pagine dei profeti. ("Nullam quippe rem magnam sine Dei auxilio perfici posse credidit, nec esse in nobis vim ullam felicitatis, nisi eam divina ope et celesti consequamur.") Ed ecco il messaggero degli dei Mercurio che guida Priamo nella fuga equivalere all'angelo Raffaele che salvaguarda Tobia, come quelle parole di Glauco a Diomede sulla caducità dell'uomo al sesto dell'*Iliade*:

a che dimandi
il mio lignaggio? Quale delle foglie
tale è la stirpe degli umani. Il vento
brumal le sparge a terra e le ricrea
la germogliante terra a primavera.
Così l'uom nasce, così muore (145-149)

equivalgono a quelle di Jesus Sirach che nella Vulgata suonano così: "Omnis caro sicut foenum veterascet et sicut folium fructificans in arbore viridi" (XIV, 18-19); "alia generantur et alia deiciuntur; sic generatio carnis et sanguinis, alia finitur et alia nascitur" (V, 19). Ed egli, Decembrio, presume tradurle direttamente dal greco. Le rende infatti in un latino alquanto approssimativo. Le altre parole di Achille dal Decembrio così tradotte: "Et certe imo in homine malus operatur neque aliud mihi super est, nisi quod passus sum erumnas animo," gli ricordano il detto di Salomone: "Non erit memoria sapientis similiter ut stulti in perpetuum et futura tempora oblivione cuncta pariter operient, moritur doctus similiter ut indoctus et id circo teduit me vitae meae."

Nella sua apologia *In calumniatorem Platonis* non omereggia meno il Cardinal Bessarione. Il quale non ha difficoltà ad ammettere che per un misterioso dono di natura, oltre che dai libri di Mosè, Omero avesse conoscenza della colpa, e caduta di Lucifero e che da lui, come da loro teologo, l'imparassero Aristotile e Platone. Ecco le sue parole: "Luciferum vera illum sua culpa eiectum in terram a coelo execrandumque esse illi [Platone e Aristotile] quoque didicerunt ab Omero suo teologo, qui, sive beneficio quodam naturae, sive Moysis prophetae scriptis carmine suo exposuerat lapsum Luciferi, quem ille Atam appellat."[1]

Occorre insistere a dimostrare che sui problemi nascenti da una tale questione omerica i problemi della filologia pura e della critica pura mai avrebbero potuto prendere il sopravvento?

E difatti la virtù corrosiva crebbe in essi con l'illanguidirsi della sensibilità umanistica.

Quando, un bel giorno, il vento della ribellione passò sulla terra e dal cuore dell'uomo affiorò la fede nella propria capacità di portare più oltre ogni limite (la fede che dipendessero solo dalla sua mano creatrice e ricreatrice, perfino quei valori supremi ai quali il mondo usava inchinarsi come a un retaggio primordiale) allora anche sull'*Iliade* e l'*Odissea* la luce sacra s'affievolì e presto si spense; e il pensiero critico, non più attratto dalle coincidenze di Dio, dovette rassegnarsi a cercare in esse le incongruenze dell'uno o dei molti che le avevano scritte. E se è vero che, fra la metà del secolo XVI e la rivoluzione francese, l'Europa passò, dall'estremo trascendentalismo all'immanentismo estremo, tutta la gamma della sensibilità religiosa, non è poi nemmeno un paradosso

[1] Bessarionis, *In calumniatorem Platonis*, Libri IV textum graecum addita vetera versione latina primum edidit L. Mohler, Paderbornae (1927), p. 243.

che in quegli anni la storia tempestosa della fortuna di Dio è piena di punti d'incontro con la storia, in apparenza così placida, della fortuna di Omero.

Se si volesse ancora una riprova che, in quella metà del secolo XVI, i fondatori del così detto classicismo o neo-classicismo europeo dovettero cotesta loro aridità legislativa al trovarsi ormai del tutto fuori del magico cerchio dell'umanesimo, basterebbe che proprio dallo Scaligero fabbricatore di poetiche aristoteliche la pietas religiosa della Selva omerica polizianesca cominciò a venire scambiata per trastullo retorico.

Quando poi leggete i *Pensieri diversi* di Alessandro Tassoni, allora un capitolo solo il IX: "Se Omero nell'*Iliade* sia quel sommo poeta che i Greci ci danno a credere," vi sembra bastare a sciogliere in un sorriso di malizioso scetticismo, due millenni di varia ma sempre religiosa reverenza ad Omero.

Ma perchè—osserva Tassoni con una leggera aria di inquisitore che vuol risalire alle origini—perchè potrebbe tener sospeso gli animi dei lettori il libro che segnatamente scrive Plutarco autore grande e celebre delle lodi d'Omero, se si lasciassero intatte le ragioni comunque deboli ch'egli adduce, prima di metter mano all'*Iliade* [e in nessuna frase più che in questa "metter mano" egli avrebbe potuto infondere meglio il suo animo di dissacratore] non sarà credo io se non bene, il rivedere i conti [come sopra!] a Plutarco stesso così in compendio e dare una breve scorsa alle cose che egli va scegliendo e tirando con gli argani *per dare a credere a semplici che un cieco cantalluscio, per così dire, fosse non solamente perito in tutte le arti e in tutte le scienze umane e divine, ma ne fosse ancora inventore*: fatica la più vana e leggera di quante fossero mai da quell'uomo dotto intraprese; come pure dovette essere quella di Aristocle Messenio, che, secondo il testimonio di Suida, scrisse dieci libri di filosofia in disputando utrum praestantior esset Homerus an Plato.

Lette con l'esperienza del poi queste pagine ci restano nella memoria come il prologo d'una grande storia nè ci sorprende che la prima mossa a una ribellione destinata a operare poi specialmente o solo fuori d'Italia, venisse proprio da questa Italia, dove gli eroi e i santi armonizzavano da quasi tre secoli in una gloria immortale di marmi, di libri, di tele, di chiese, perchè il più valido appoggio all'eresia è sempre stato la fede.

Nessuna analogia, a prima vista, tra i savi solitari, Cartesio e Locke, Leibniz e Hume, ancora in qualche modo fedeli, malgrado tutto, ai vecchi libri latini, e i non latineggianti filosofi della commedia borghese, per entro la quale Beaumarchais propagherà tra poco la sua risata vertiginosa alle piazze e alle regge: ma teneteli poi d'occhio insieme a qualche episodio della lunga guerra fra antichi e moderni, gettate tra loro il nome del più grande degli antichi, il divino Omero, e li vedrete associati in un comune sentimento di curiosità, indefinibile tra il malessere e l'ironia. Ecco Francesco de Boisrobert che, analizzando nel 1631,

l'*Iliade* e l'*Odissea* è molto vicino a parlarne come di un centone; ecco i fratelli Carlo e Claudio Perrault che nel 1655 non si peritano a tirarle in ballo in un poema burlesco; ecco l'abate d'Aubignac che, nelle famose *Conjectures académiques ou dissertation sur l'Iliade* del 1664 (pubblicate postume nel 1715) imposta una questione tanto affine a quella omerica da non differirne più se non nel nome. Nel 1714 Houdard de la Motte, cavaliere di buon gusto, non si limita a discorrere, alza la mano, agisce, riducendo l'*Iliade* a dodici canti non più di quanti, a suo avviso, ne avrebbe scritti Omero se fosse vissuto in quegli anni; e così sostituisce implicitamente all'idea umanistica della sapienza primordiale l'idea illuministica della primordiale stupidità. Ormai il fatto letterario s'intreccia e confonde sempre più al fatto filologico, e l'idea di Omero si trova vicina l'idea di Dio dappertutto, perfino al mitico banchetto del 1789 descritto da La Harpe, dove la più sconcertante profezia della rivoluzione francese sarebbe risonata nel brindisi di Cazotte e vi si sarebbero udite anche le seguenti parole: "Sì o signori, io sono tanto sicuro che non c'è Dio quanto sono sicuro che Omero è uno sciocco."

Del resto chi volesse dar risalto al contrasto tra lo spirito dell'umanesimo e quella dell'età successiva preilluministica e illuministica non avrebbe che da paragonare l'Omero del Poliziano e quello del Fontenelle (1657-1757) nel seguente dialogo intitolato *Omero ed Esopo o della verità*:

OMERO—Davvero tutte le favole che mi hai narrate sono mirabilissime. Bisogna che tu abbia avuto molta arte a travestire in così brevi racconti gl'insegnamenti più importanti della morale, e coprire i tuoi pensieri sotto immagini tanto giuste e familiari.

ESOPO—Dolce esser lodato in quest'arte da te che l'hai così bene intesa.

OMERO—Io? Mai avuto simile pretesa.

ESOPO—Come? E non hai tu nascosto grandi misteri nelle tue opere?

OMERO—Nemmen per sogno.

ESOPO—Eppure, tutti i sapienti del mio tempo lo dicevano; e non c'era argomenti nell'*Iliade* e nell'*Odissea* cui non attribuissero le più belle allegorie. Sostenevano che tutti i segreti della fisica della teologia della morale e della stessa matematica fossero racchiusi in ciò che avevi scritto. A dire il vero, non mancava qualche difficoltà, e dove uno trovava un significato morale, l'altro ne scopriva uno fisico; ma convenivano che tu hai tutto saputo e tutto detto a chi poteva comprendere.

OMERO—Sono sincero: dubitavo che qualcuno non avrebbe mancato di capire sottilmente tutte quelle cose che io non avevo voluto dire per nulla. Allo stesso modo di come non vi è cosa più facile del profetizzare avvenimenti lontani aspettando che accadano, così non vi è nulla di ancor più semplice dello spacciar favole prospettandone l'allegoria.

ESOPO—Quale ardimento il tuo nell'affidare ai lettori la cura di riconoscere allegorie nei tuoi poemi! Che sarebbe accaduto se i tuoi versi fossero stati presi alla lettera?

OMERO—Oh, non sarebbe stato un gran male.

ESOPO—Come? Quegli dei che si stroppian l'un l'altro; e Giove saettante che in un'assemblea di divinità minaccia schiaffi all'augusta Giunone; e quel Marte ferito da Diomede che grida, tu lo dici, come nove o diecimila uomini, mentre non si comporta neppure come un uomo solo perchè invece di mettere tutti i greci in rotta, si picca d'andarsi a lagnare con Giove della sua ferita; tutto ciò sarebbe stato buono senza allegoria?

OMERO—E perchè no? Tu pensi che lo spirito umano non cerchi altro che il vero. Disingannati. L'umano spirito e la falsità simpatizzano estremamente. Se s'ha da dire la verità, sarà bene invilupparla nella favola; piacerà molto di più. All'opposto, se vuoi dir favole potranno esse ben piacere senza contenere alcuna verità. Così il vero ha bisogno di farsi prestar la faccia dal falso, per essere piacevolmente accolto dallo spirito umano; ma il falso entra in lui facilmente colla propria faccia; poichè questo è il luogo della sua nascita e della sua abituale dimora. Il vero vi è estraneo. Ti dirò di più. Quando mi fossi affaticato a immaginar favole allegoriche, sarebbe potuto accadere che la maggior parte degli uomini avesse preso la favola come una cosa non troppo lontana dalla verità e lasciato stare l'allegoria. In effetti tu sai che le mie divinità tali e quali, misteri a parte, non sono state per nulla tenute per ridicole.

ESOPO—Tutto questo mi spaventa. Temo assai che un giorno si creda che le bestie abbiano parlato, come nelle mie favole.

OMERO—Paura ridicola la tua.

ESOPO—Se si è potuto credere che gli dei abbiano tenuto i discorsi che tu hai fatti loro pronunciare, per qual motivo non si crederà che le bestie abbiano parlato alla maniera colla quale le ho fatto ragionare?

OMERO—Ah, non è la stessa cosa. Gli uomini vogliono, sì, che gli dei sian pazzi come loro; ma non ammettono che le bestie siano così sagge.

È vero; questa critica di Omero è poco filologica; è soltanto plebea e tribunizia; ma non è detto che anche il geniale ed erudito autore dei "Prolegomena" non ne dipendesse, magari senza saperlo. Egli stesso finì implicitamente ad ammetterlo quando in perfetta buona fede, tra i molti predecessori che i rimovitori del passato venivano via via discoprendogli, non volle però accettare quello a cui nelle conclusioni più appariva vicino: Giambattista Vico.

E aveva ragione, perchè le analogie erano tanto vistose quanto superficiali.

Già da un secolo, la filologia, stanca della sua secolare collaborazione con la teologia, tendeva a svincolarsene totalmente per penetrare poi nei libri di essa e nei libri della Sapienza, libera, dissacratrice, nemica, come un coltello anatomico. Sacerdote di questa nuova divinità senza Olimpo, Wolf dissacrava in suo onore i due poemi e li poneva fra essa e la teologia come un irreparabile nel quale, a guardar bene, la stessa dissoluzione della personalità umana di Omero non è se non un particolare secondario rispetto alla colossale dissoluzione dell'idea. Esattamente il contrario di quanto aveva fatto Vico che, alle nuove esigenze razionalistiche aveva potuto concedere tutto e perfino la personalità umana di Omero, a patto però di ribadire il valore ideale dei due poemi divini, tutori perenni della "sapienza volgare" i cui principi sono Prov-

videnza divina, moderazione di passioni co' matrimoni e immortalità dell'anima umana con le sepolture; e il criterio che si usa—sono le sue parole—è che ciò che si sente giusto da tutta o la maggior parte degli uomini debba essere la regola della vita socievole (nei quali principi e criteri conviene la sapienza volgare di tutti i legislatori e la sapienza riposta dei più reputati filosofi); questi devono essere i confini dell'umana religione. E chiunque se ne voglia trar fuori egli veda di non trarsi fuori da tutta l'umanità.

Così Vico aveva riconsacrato i due poemi con un animo, checchè si dica, molto vicino a quello dei platonici del Rinascimento; riscoprendo in quella primordiale poesia il primordiale mistero del Verbo, aveva inverato un'altra volta nella filosofia la filologia "scienza del certo."

Queste note però non sarebbero ben concluse senza un'osservazione di cui ci saranno forse grati i devoti di Dante sparsi per tutto il mondo.

Il romantico secolo scorso (sempre capovolgendo concetti fino a quel momento tradizionali) ci lasciò in retaggio un'immagine di Dante titanico spirito ma tutto concluso nel ciclo del Medio Evo. Quanto più si ristudia oggi il Rinascimento tanto meglio s'avverte la fallacia di questa concezione e l'opportunità di tornare in qualcosa all'antica.

Se la rimeditazione cristiana di alcuni valori sapienziali pagani è essenziale all'umanesimo, nessuno la precorse e stimolò meglio di Dante. E lo si vede anche a proposito della sua concezione di Omero. Nel *nobile castello* del Limbo non per trastullo retorico egli rappresentò il poeta delle origini con la spada in mano condottiero della Sapienza. E così lo fece evocare da Stazio nel *Purgatorio*:

> Costoro e Persio ed io ed altri assai,
> Rispose il duca mio, son con quel greco
> *Che le Muse lattar più ch'altri mai.*
> (*Purg.*, XXII, 100-102)

C'è in queste come in tante altre parole della *Divina Commedia* la grande idea umanistica che la iniziale prerivelazione cristiana arrivò al genere umano per il tramite dei poeti, primo Omero.

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EMERSON AND BERGSON ON THE COMIC

JOSEPH JONES

"NO recent discussion of humor," declared Bliss Perry shortly after Bergson's *Laughter* had appeared, "is more illuminating and more directly applicable to the conditions of American life than that of the contemporary French philosopher Bergson."[1] Professor Perry developed this statement by pointing out that Bergson's theory, insisting upon laughter as a social function, is particularly applicable to a newly settled country where incongruities are still largely unresolved. This is plausible enough; and the developments in American humor during the third of a century since Perry first made his remarks will bear him out. Our humor has been nothing if not social; of this, the present current of satire continues to offer abundant illustration.

But did it remain for a twentieth-century Frenchman to develop a theory of the comic that would apply, in retrospect, to American conditions? If Bergson did and does fit us, are there no hints at such an interpretation among our own philosophers? For a test of his observation, Professor Perry might well have turned to his own favorite Emerson; for, as we are about to see, there is more than a casual relationship between Emerson and Bergson.

The fact that Emerson's rather slight essay on "The Comic" (originally delivered as a lecture in 1839-40 and published in the *Dial* in 1843) has lain imbedded in *Letters and Social Aims* may explain why scholars have not sooner caught the interesting parallels between Emerson's view of the comic and that of Bergson; for it is clear, upon inspection, that the primary conceptions of the two men are quite similar, rising from correspondingly similar (though by no means identical) views of man and his affairs. In a realm of criticism where disagreement has long been notoriously violent, any extensive agreement between a pair of thinkers separated by a generation is worth exploring.

I

It may be in order, first, to lay the ghost of a belief held by some readers (and many nonreaders) that Emerson is invariably grave and cheerless. It would not be quite accurate to say that Emerson lacked a sense

[1] Bliss Perry, *The American Mind* (Boston and New York, 1912), p. 170.

of humor. His intellectual flexibility, his detachment, his uniformly benign and genial deportment, all contributed to a highly refined attitude which one finds so frequently in the great humorists. To be sure, we shall see that his philosophy of the Whole versus the Incomplete led him in theory to place humor in a subordinate role and to keep it so subordinate in his customary practice that to some he borders on being a study in the anatomy of overseriousness. His own humorous perceptions, however, were so well developed that he was obliged to explain them to himself—thus the essay on "The Comic" comes to be written quite naturally as a corollary to the doctrine of the Over-Soul. Humor must be accepted; for, not being a dualist, Emerson could not conveniently consign it to the devil.

The problem was soluble; in fact, the integration of the comic into his world-view was fairly easy, Emerson found:

> Reason is the whole, and whatsoever is not that is a part. The whole of Nature is agreeable to the whole of thought, or to the Reason; but separate any part of Nature and attempt to look at it as a whole by itself, and the feeling of the ridiculous begins. The perpetual game of humor is to look with considerate good nature at every object in existence, *aloof*, as a man might look at a mouse, comparing it with the eternal Whole; enjoying the figure which each self-satisfied particular cuts in the unrespecting All, and dismissing it with a benison.[2]

Briefly stated, whatever is not cosmic is comic, and to a greater or lesser extent the joke is on the whole human race. Emerson's comparatively low opinion of humorous discourse as a device for exposure follows naturally from his distaste for halfness of all kinds. Instead of being delighted and stimulated by exposing inadequacy, he regretted the necessity for doing so; it should be the lofty prophetic mission of the poet and seer to announce and glorify the All rather than merely to show up the pitiful inadequacy of the part. Thus Emerson was usually too benevolent to use satire, but not always; and when he did so, it was satire of a high and terrible kind. One does not progress far into his work, especially the verse, before one encounters several touches of "Uriel's cherub scorn" that are all too sufficiently withering.

> The God who made New Hampshire
> Taunted the lofty land
> With little men;—
> Small bat and wren
> House in the oak:—
> If earth-fire cleave
> The upheaved land, and bury the folk,
> The southern crocodile would grieve.
> Virtue palters; Right is hence;
> Freedom praised, but hid;
> Funeral eloquence
> Rattles the coffin-lid.

[2] Emerson, "The Comic," *Complete Works* (Centenary ed.), VIII, 158-159.

The angels themselves, one can learn from Emerson, may turn satirist upon sufficient provocation.

Emerson's dislike of uproarious laughter, which led him to find fault with Carlyle's humor-to-excess, will recall the earlier objections of Lord Chesterfield and others to any audible laughter whatsoever. Those words and phrases in "The Comic" which are descriptive of physical laughter show this quite plainly: "pleasant spasms," "muscular irritation," "the peculiar explosions of laughter," "violent convulsions of the face and sides, and obstreperous roarings of the throat." How much the physical presence or absence of laughter has had to do with developing the time-hallowed distinction between *wit* and *humor* it is difficult to say; in Emerson's America, however, the East was more likely to smile and the West to guffaw. The extent to which a preference for highly genteel wit still lingered among the Brahmins may be gauged by the fiasco of Mark Twain's Whittier Dinner speech in 1877. But, on the other hand, Emerson's own sketch of Dr. Ezra Ripley, which would bear comparison with some of *The New Yorker's* "profiles" of today, has a tone of light irony all too rarely used by one whose temperament and training unfortunately would not often permit him to let himself go. The essay on "The Comic" supplies further evidence of a taste for humor that we would anyway be forced to take for granted in a lover of Aristophanes, Apuleius, Chaucer, Rabelais, Cervantes, Molière, and, above all, Montaigne. Still, one cannot help feeling that an occasional dash of Carlyle—or of Henry Thoreau, for that matter—might have seasoned several of the drier essays.

In Emerson, then, we have to deal with a genuinely humorous attitude which is both deep-seated and intellectually rarefied. We may now turn to his brief essay and observe how he develops his formal theory of the comic.

First, Emerson reverts briefly to his familiar premise of the One versus the Many:

> The essence of all jokes, of all comedy, seems to be an honest or well-intended halfness; a non-performance of what is pretended to be performed, at the same time that one is giving loud pledges of performance. The balking of the intellect, the frustrated expectation, the break of continuity in the intellect, is comedy; and it announces itself physically in the pleasant spasms we call laughter.[8]

Emerson thus loosely allies himself with the "superiority" school of theorists on humor by making humor a cosmic matter and pointing out that, in his incompleteness, man (with a small *m*) is a perpetual joke. Incompleteness in religion, science, literature, material possessions—all are potential material for comic treatment:

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

Alike in all these cases and in the instance of cowardice or fear of any sort, from the loss of life to the loss of spoons, the majesty of man is violated. He whom all things should serve, serves some one of his own tools.[4]

Taken in this sense, "Hamatreya," "Uriel," and the "Ode Inscribed to W. H. Channing" are all satirical verse.

Out of this view of things arises the cardinal Emersonian doctrine of self-reliance and independent action. Since a more complete and spontaneous action is characteristic of the self-reliant man, it follows that he who lets himself be hedged in by "any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution" (*The American Scholar*) is not only a moral coward but a fool as well.

We do nothing that is not laughable whenever we quit our spontaneous sentiment. All our plans, managements, houses, poems, if compared with the wisdom and love which man represents, are equally imperfect and ridiculous.[5]

Had he been any less in earnest, Emerson might well have added to *The American Scholar* and *The Divinity School Address* the observation that the timid scholar and the hidebound preacher, in addition to their other limitations, are both first-class jackasses.

The usefulness of the comic perception is boundless, Emerson believes. Conversely, the lack of it is inexorably stultifying:

[The] perception of the Comic seems to be a balance-wheel in our metaphysical structure. It appears to be an essential element in a fine character. Wherever the intellect is constructive, it will be found. We feel the absence of it as a defect in the noblest and most oracular soul.[6]

Thus we learn that Emerson thought through rather carefully the meaning of laughter, and, as a good modern Erasmian, paid his debt to Folly. Coming as it did at the time of the earliest efflorescence of what we sometimes call "frontier" humor (such early examples as Crockett and Seba Smith had begun to prepare the way, but the larger figures were yet to be heard from), Emerson's view might be expected to derive somewhat more than it does from classical American sources. Yet it has the same freshness as his other writings, the same Yankee determination to see for oneself, as far as one can, just how the world runs. It may suggest, at the same time, that Emerson was more alive to contemporary humor than his other essays would lead us to think, though it would certainly be a mistake to assume that his theory relates solely or even principally to local applications. Rather, he would find in the currently

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 170.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

popular Major Jack Downing (whom he mentions in other places) an amusing local manifestation of the general "law."

II

The theory of Bergson, being more generally known, need be only briefly summarized before detailed comparisons are attempted. Laughter, Bergson insists, is a corrective. It is purely intellectual and always social in its aims. Its target is inelasticity, unadaptability in human character; it is the ever-watchful foe of absent-mindedness, eccentricity, and automatism: "by laughter, society avenges itself for the liberties taken with it."[7] It is not, however, a fixed decorum in society that is being violated so much as the creative urge of things, the famous *élan vital* which animates the universe.[8] The details of these primary theses will become clearer as the following comparison develops.

Both Emerson and Bergson thus agree that the comic is an exposure of some fault in the butt of the laughter; the causes assigned for the fault are somewhat at variance. Emerson makes it to be inadequacy or "halfness" as he calls it—not inadequacy in *being*, but inadequacy in the *realization*, the *fulfillment of being*, which, as Emerson elsewhere points out, is a clog to action—a builder of conventions and barriers of all kinds. The chief emphasis in Bergson goes to inadequacy in *action*— a kind of ludicrous paralysis which it is the function of laughter to diagnose and, if possible, cure. In either theory, the individual has got himself out of step with the nature of things, and ridicule is the penalty he has to pay. Such incongruity, furthermore, is no mere lapse of decorum; it is an offense against the gods. It is at this primary juncture that we can best appreciate how deeply the fact of the comic is embedded in the philosophy of each of these thinkers; how readily it is made to fit his system.

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[7] Bergson, *Laughter* (London, 1911), p. 197.

[8] This passage (*Laughter*, pp. 28-29) will illustrate further: "To sum up, whatever be the doctrine to which our reason assents, our imagination has a very clear-cut philosophy of its own: in every human form it sees the effort of a soul which is shaping matter, a soul which is infinitely supple and perpetually in motion, subject to no law of gravitation, for it is not the earth that attracts it. This soul imparts a portion of its winged lightness to the body it animates: the immateriality which thus passes into matter is what is called gracefulness. Matter, however, is obstinate and resists. It draws to itself the ever-alert activity of this higher principle, would fain convert it to its own inertia and cause it to revert to mere automatism. It would fain immobilise the intelligently varied movements of the body in stupidly contracted grooves, stereotype in permanent grimaces the fleeting expressions of the face, in short, imprint on the whole person such an attitude as to make it appear immersed and absorbed in the materiality of some mechanical occupation instead of ceaselessly renewing its vitality by keeping in touch with a living ideal. Where matter thus succeeds in dulling the outward life of the soul, in petrifying its movements and thwarting its gracefulness, it achieves, at the expense of the body, an effect that is comic."

III

Up to this point, the similarities noted, though of considerable significance, have been general; the case is hardly complete without further evidence of a more specific kind. This is to be found in a number of parallels which will show us the two men on common ground.

First, there is the comic as an exposure of inadequacy.[9] For Emerson, a "halfness" is exposed; Bergson speaks of "a certain inborn lack of elasticity of both senses and intelligence." Emerson, we note, does not close the door upon the poor fool by assuming that his inadequacy is "inborn," though at times he must have felt that there was little enough hope for some of his neighbors.

The limitation upon the comic as exclusively intellectual is strong in both men.[10] Being exclusively intellectual, the comic, it follows, is also exclusively human. "A taste for fun," says Emerson, "is all but universal in our species, which is the only joker in Nature."[11] Bergson agrees: "The first point to which attention should be called is that the comic does not exist outside the pale of what is strictly *human*."[12]

Concreteness in the comic is a further point at which we find agreement.[13] Emerson shows perhaps a bit more clearly how the separation of something from its place in the scheme of things is comic; Bergson is less philosophical than technical. As in Emerson's poem, "Each and All," the seashells and other objects are robbed of significance when taken out of their natural setting, likewise any object contemplated alone "in absolute nature" is comic to the degree that "no useful, no respectable qualities can rescue it from the ludicrous." Bergson observes that several authors "have noticed that humor delights in concrete terms, technical details, definite facts."

This same concreteness may often produce a depersonalization, an automatism, which both men find ludicrous, especially as examined on the basis of substitution of the physical for the moral.[14] In Emerson, it is "astonishment of the intellect at the disappearance of the man out of nature" (the same shrinkage or separation that forms the "fable" of *The American Scholar*); in Bergson, it becomes codified into two "gen-

[9] Emerson, p. 159; Bergson, pp. 11, 69.
[10] Emerson, p. 160; Bergson, p. 4.
[11] Emerson, p. 157
[12] Bergson, p. 3. Both Emerson and Bergson begin with this point as a postulate, Bergson remarking (p. 3) that "it is strange that so important a fact, and such a simple one too, has not attracted to a greater degree the attention of philosophers." The extent to which other philosophers and theorists of the comic may have influenced both men, as common sources, must be left to separate enquiry.
[13] Emerson, p. 159; Bergson, pp. 127-128.
[14] Emerson, p. 170; Bergson, pp. 50-51.

eral laws" of the comic—for example: "We laugh every time a person gives us the impression of being a thing."[15]

Both Emerson and Bergson (as one might expect) have a good deal to say about comic faces—the brilliant achievements of French caricature no doubt helping to illuminate and deepen Bergson's observations.[16] Emerson's remarks are more diffuse but none the less penetrating, especially when supplemented by the familiar passage from *Self-Reliance* which describes the "foolish face of praise." Bergson's succinct analysis describes the similarly "coagulated" face as one in which "the person's whole moral life has crystallised into this particular cast of features."

The foregoing considerations all help to point up the belief of both Emerson and Bergson that the comic is of deep social significance. Comparatively extensive elaboration of this belief on Emerson's part may be here in point; the brief quotation from Bergson is but one of many hammer strokes upon a theme which the reader of *Laughter* is never permitted to lose sight of.

EMERSON: We have no deeper interest than our integrity, and that we should be made aware by joke and by stroke of any lie we entertain . . . The perception of the Comic is a tie of sympathy with other men, a pledge of sanity, and a protection from those perverse tendencies and gloomy insanities in which fine intellects sometimes lose themselves. A rogue alive to the ludicrous is still convertible. If that sense is lost, his fellow men can do little for him.[17]

BERGSON: Our laughter is always the laughter of a group . . . However spontaneous it seems, laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughers, real or imaginary.[18]

Emerson and Bergson thus stand firmly together in their concepts of the paramount usefulness of the comic to society. Emerson tends, however, to be less concerned with immediate correction than with revelation—since a man must mend himself, no external compulsion can be relied upon to do much for him unless and until he is brought to see his own weakness. The highest standard, Emerson would insist, lies outside conventional society, which at any given moment is the merest appearance. Laughter pricks us for our incompleteness with reference to Nature; therefore much laughter might well be directed against all of society. In this view we have a clearer explanation of the famous phrase "foolish consistency, the hobgoblin of little minds" (*Self-Reliance*)—which is so often quoted without the qualifying adjective. We might, then, with some justice say that the fruits of laughter tend in Emerson to relate a little more to the individual than in Bergson, who has the wel-

[15] Bergson, p. 58.
[16] Emerson, pp. 170-171; Bergson, pp. 24-25.
[17] Emerson, pp. 161-162.
[18] Bergson, p. 6.

fare of society comparatively more at heart. Emerson's sympathies reach out towards the unhappy object of the laughter; Bergson's remain more with the laughers. Another important variation in Bergson is the stress he lays upon evolution, a concept not developed in Emerson's day.

One other pair of quotations will give us in a short, tight form the summary views of both on the comic as a discipline.

> EMERSON: We must learn by laughter, as well as by tears and terrors; explore the whole of Nature, the farce and buffoonery in the yard below, as well as the lessons of poets and philosophers upstairs in the hall, and get the rest and refreshment of the shaking of the sides.[19]

> BERGSON: Laughter is, above all, a corrective. Being intended to humiliate, it must make a painful impression on the person against whom it is directed. By laughter, society avenges itself for the liberties taken with it. It would fail in its object if it bore the stamp of sympathy or kindness.[20]

We have already observed that Emerson belongs loosely in the "superiority" school of theorists, and may now without violence place Bergson along with him in that company, with the qualification that in both men any egotism—any individual "superiority"—is largely lost in the more general concern. Both would no doubt recognize the personal delights of laughter, but would emphatically insist that Hobbes' theory of "sudden glory" to the individual needs extension.

Brief illustrations of how the comic serves as social discipline must here suffice. Professional callousness as material for the comic, we note, is mentioned and developed by each.[21] Emerson cites with evident amusement the delight of a local doctor over a "perfect" case of apoplexy; Molière's doctors, who "treat the patient as though he had been made for the doctors, and nature herself as an appendage to medicine," serve Bergson for the same purpose. Emerson discusses jesting as a weapon of philosophy, and refers to the familiar comic trick of turning things upside down;[22] Bergson, who supplies innumerable applications of his "general laws of the comic," abounds in skillfully chosen jests and comic scenes, and is much more concerned with documenting his propositions.

Both men are interested in the effects of ritual and ceremony, which they regard as essentially stultifying.[23] Emerson's personal fate as a minister no doubt motivates some of what he has to say on the subject, besides tying his remarks more closely to religious ceremonial. But back of each, as he speaks of ceremony as clothing, stands *Die Kleider, ihr*

[19] Emerson, p. 173.
[20] Bergson, p. 197.
[21] Emerson, pp. 166-168; Bergson, p. 178.
[22] Emerson, pp. 163, 169.
[23] Emerson, pp. 164-165; Bergson, pp. 44-45.

Werden und Wirken: von Diog. Teufelsdröckh, so ably edited in *Sartor Resartus.*

We may return now to the broader principles upon which both theorists rest their theories. Out of each man's detailed thinking about the comic there rises a vision of art and truth which reaches an eloquent height, once more suggesting the thoroughness with which the mind of each has accepted and digested humor. The passage from Bergson implies for the comic a more organic connection with other aspects of art; Emerson here shows us quite plainly that in his view, the art of comic exposure—useful as it is—still deals only with the pathetic halfness of life. Perhaps the most interesting single point in both is the comment on idealism in art.

EMERSON: Reason does not joke, and men of reason do not; a prophet, in whom the moral sentiment predominates, or a philosopher, in whom the love of truth predominates, these do not joke, but they bring the standard, the ideal whole, exposing all actual defect; and hence the best of all jokes is the sympathetic contemplation of things by the understanding from the philosopher's point of view. There is no joke so true and deep in actual life as when some pure idealist goes up and down among the institutions of society, attended by a man who knows the world, and who, sympathizing with the philosopher's scrutiny, sympathizes also with the confusion and indignation of the detected, skulking institutions. His perception of disparity, his eye wandering perpetually from the rule to the crooked, lying, thieving fact, makes the eyes run over with laughter.[24]

BERGSON: So art, whether it be painting or sculpture, poetry or music, has no other object than to brush aside the utilitarian symbols, the conventional and socially accepted generalities, in short, everything that veils reality from us, in order to bring us face to face with reality itself. It is from a misunderstanding on this point that the dispute between realism and idealism in art has arisen. Art is certainly a more direct vision of reality. But this purity of perception implies a break with convention, an innate and specially localised disinterestedness of sense or consciousness, in short, a certain immateriality of life, which is what has always been called idealism. So that we might say, without in any way playing upon the meaning of the words, that realism is in the work when idealism is in the soul, and that it is only through ideality that we can resume contact with reality.[25]

Finally, we see recorded at the very end of each essay a word of caution about the limitations of the comic, intended to serve as warning against its abuse.[26]

IV

If Bergson's theory of humor, then, is "illuminating and directly applicable to the conditions of American life," as Professor Perry suggested, it may now be added that both in its broad outlines and in many

[24] Emerson, pp. 159-160.
[25] Bergson, p. 157.
[26] Emerson, pp. 173-174; Bergson, p. 200.

of its finer details, an American thinker before Bergson had already begun to make the application. But this is hardly the larger fact: it is the quality of the similarity, not the coincidence itself, that we need finally to remember. From even so short an excursion into the minds of two of the greatest of modern men, we can learn that a common passion for the ideal may lead the most independent of minds into common channels. In their attempts to explain one of the most elusive of all aesthetic questions, Emerson and Bergson seem curiously subject to the same gravitational pull; and their separate explanations blend together and reinforce each other. "Assuming the Over-Soul," one of them might say, "such a congruency between us need not seem surprising"; to which the other might add, "Assuming the *élan vital*, of course not."

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KAFKA, LESSING, AND VIGNY

VERNON HALL, JR.

HE who would attempt to understand Franz Kafka by keeping up with the criticisms of his two major novels is soon discouraged by the increasing stream of material he must wade through. Furthermore, the effort brings little reward. There seem to be as many interpretations of what Kafka meant as there are critics. This state of affairs has become so confusing that each new critic now begins by warning the reader to pay no attention to previous Kafka criticisms but to confine his attention to what Kafka wrote—with, of course, the aid of the new critic who has discovered the "key" which makes all clear.

It has been suggested that no single interpretation of Kafka's work is possible, that his symbols are capable of an infinite number of meanings and that all we can be sure of is that the dominant feeling is anxiety.[1] Appealing as this is to the existentialist, sympathetic as it is to all who have worked with symbolism and are careful to make a distinction between it and allegory, we are uncomfortable when the hard-headed critic within each of us murmurs: "that which can mean anything, means nothing" even if we do not go as far as the critic who wrote that *The Castle* of Kafka is

> . . . a perfect triumph of German art. For a German who is perfectly understood is a German deflated: his ultimate meaning is commonplace, trivial, or puerile. Thus Goethe and Wagner: when you get at the final meaning of *Faust*, or of *Parsifal*, it is nothing but a platitude: you must reclaim land and feed the people; you must not waste your time with girls if you want to succeed in life. Sickening . . . a true artist, if he be a German, draws a veil over his meaning and casts a spell on you by his manner; your journey leads nowhere, but you have the great pleasure of the journey.
>
> Kafka has done this marvelously; and his destiny or his temperament, served him well: his masterpiece is left unfinished, so that we are left on the brink of an abyss, and full of wonderment. It would have been better for *Faust*, or *Parsifal*, or *Zarathustra* to have been left unfinished.[2]

Here is one solution. Kafka is meaningless. If this does not satisfy us, we are left with the confusion that has resulted from the multifarious

[1] James Burnham, "Observations on Kafka," *Partisan Review*, XIV (1947), 192.

[2] Denis Saurat, "A Note on *The Castle*," in the *Kafka Problem*, ed. Angel Flores (New York, 1946), pp. 181-182.

interpretations that have been offered us. Can we clear up some of this confusion?

The first step is to discover whether we can advance from the individual to the class; whether, instead of having to take each critic's position as absolute, we can find that his point of view enables us to group him with other critics. If we do this, we discover that there are two main approaches to Kafka: the religious and the naturalistic.

The second step is to discover whether there is a way to read Kafka's *The Trial* and *The Castle* which will be equally meaningful to both schools. There is such a way. It is to read them as religious satires, to treat Kafka as a religious humorist. We have the evidence of Max Brod that, when Kafka read the first chapter of *The Trial* to his friends, they laughed immoderately. Kafka, himself, went into such spasms of mirth that he had to interrupt his reading.[3] Thomas Mann, in his introduction to the American edition of *The Castle*, suggests that "religious humorist" is an appropriate term for Kafka. This characterization is a favorite with a critic like John Kelly who has worked out Kafka's theological symbolism in some detail. He says that Kafka "shows every sign of being the greatest humorist since Swift."[4]

It is strange that this characterization of Kafka has been largely limited to critics in the religious group. Surely one does not have to be a member of the Church of England to appreciate Swift's *Tale of a Tub*. And what is more humorous, ironic, indeed ridiculous from the naturalistic point of view, than Joseph K's search for divine justice in *The Trial* and K's for divine grace in *The Castle*? One recent critic of the naturalistic school, Charles Neider, sees clearly that *The Castle* may be read as a "satire on the particular search for grace that K represents."[5] Neider, however, is determined to prove that Kafka's novels are deliberate exploitations of psychoanalytic tenets, and the reader of his book soon forgets his earlier insight during his lengthy exposition of his thesis. One would think that more of the nonreligious critics would have hailed Kafka as one of the great satirists of religion. But they have been so determined to take issue with their opponents that they have denied the religious symbolism of the novels, forgetting that from their own philosophical point of view they have nothing to lose and much to gain by keeping it.

Although it is possible to read social or psychological meanings into Kafka's symbols, it is apparent that they are primarily theological. No one with the slightest acquaintance with religious doctrine can fail to

[3] *Franz Kafka* (New York, 1947), p. 178.
[4] "*The Trial* and the Theology of Crisis," *The Kafka Problem*, p. 156.
[5] *The Frozen Sea* (New York, 1948), pp. 40-41.

recognize this. Yet it has not been recognized by a large number of naturalistic critics.

The reason is, largely, because the tradition of religious satire has been forgotten by most men whose interest is primarily in the modern novel. They cannot help, of course, noting the large part that satire against the Catholic Church plays in the writings of James Joyce. Yet they do not see that Kafka's position in regard to his orthodox Jewish father is not without parallels with Joyce's in regard to his Irish Catholic family. They have forgotten how Kafka mocked at the religion of his father. His father's religious formalism was "nothing, a joke, not even a joke." As a boy the opening of the Ark of the Covenant always reminded him of "a shooting range at the fair, where there was also a box with a door which opened if you hit the bull's-eye, except that there something interesting came out, whereas here there were always just the same old dolls with no heads."[6] Later on, when his friends were trying to bring him back to the faith of his fathers, Kafka could not stomach the elaborate ritual.

There is in Kafka's method much that reminds us of earlier religious satirists. This will be made clear by two examples. They have been chosen with a double purpose in mind. They not only illustrate the method of this kind of satire, but the symbols they use are so close to those of Kafka that they might well have suggested to him the central images of *The Trial* and *The Castle*.

Here is the first one. It was written by Alfred de Vigny.

> Voici la vie humaine :
>
> Je me figure une foule d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfants, saisis dans un sommeil profond. Ils se réveillent emprisonnés. Ils s'accoutument à leur prison et s'y font de petits jardins. Peu à peu, ils s'aperçoivent qu'on les enlève les uns après les autres pour toujours. Ils ne savent ni pourquoi ils sont en prison, ni où on les conduit après et ils savent qu'ils ne le sauront jamais.
>
> Cependant, il y en a parmi eux qui ne cessent de se quereller pour savoir l'histoire de leur *procès* [my italics], et il y en a qui en inventent les pièces ; d'autres qui racontent ce qu'ils deviennent après la prison, sans le savoir.
>
> Ne sont-ils pas fous ?
>
> Il est certain que le maitre de la prison, le gouverneur, nous eût fait savoir, s'il l'eût voulu, et notre procès et notre arrêt.
>
> Puisqu'il ne l'a pas voulu et ne le voudra jamais, contentons-nous de le remercier des logements plus ou moins bons qu'il nous donne, et, puisque nous ne pouvons nous soustraire à la misère commune, ne la rendons pas double par des querelles sans fin. Nous ne sommes pas sûrs de tout savoir au sortir du cachot, mais sûrs de ne rien savoir dedans.
>
> Que Dieu est bon, quel geôlier adorable, qui sème tant de fleurs qu'il y en a dans le préau de notre prison ! Il y en a (le croirait-on ?) à qui la prison devient si chère, qu'ils craignent d'en être délivrés ! Quelle est donc cette miséricorde admirable et

[6] Kafka's letter to his father, quoted by Brod, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

consolante qui nous rend la punition si douce? Car nulle nation n'a douté que nous ne fussions punis—on ne sait de quoi.[7]

It is not necessary to assume that *le procès* of Vigny became *Der Prozess* of Kafka to feel the spiritual kinship between the two.

The second example is a fable of Lessing's that we can be fairly sure Kafka, lover of the German classics and admirer of Lessing,[8] read. Although Lessing calls it merely, *"Eine Parabel,"* he could have called it "Das Schloss." Since it is too long to quote, a summary will have to do.

Once there was an exceedingly great king in whose capital was a palace. The peculiar thing about this palace was that the dimensions, though vast, were unknown. The architecture was equally mysterious. The townspeople were in the dark as to all that concerned the place, but that did not keep them from speculating about it. They wondered how the rooms of the palace received light with so few windows. Even stranger was the large number of entrances, when a great portal on each side would have served the purpose better. Perhaps it was so that, if one were called to the palace, he could go by the most direct route. But they did not know.

Yet, the villagers did have old, scarcely legible ground plans of the palace. But not only did the various ground plans differ, but each man was sure that his particular plan was the only true one. One night the watchman cried, "Fire! Fire in the palace!" Each one rushed to save, not the palace, but his own plan, then went, plan in hand, into the street and argued with his neighbors concerning the location of the fire. "See neighbor, here it burns. Here is the best place to get to the fire."—"No, neighbor, it is here!"—"What are you both thinking of? It is on fire here."—"If it were burning there it wouldn't matter, but the fire is here!"—"Put it out there if you want to. I won't."—"And I won't there!"—"Nor I there!" Fortunately there was no fire. The watchman had mistaken the aurora borealis for the glow of a conflagration. If the palace had been on fire, though, it would surely have burnt down.[9]

No one who reads these parables of Vigny and Lessing can fail to appreciate the religious humor. Kafka's two major novels, though more subtle and complex, can be read in the same way. Both his use of religious symbols and his ironic tone remind us that he was working in the same tradition as Vigny and Lessing. Even granting this, there are some who will surely object that the fundamental Kafka problem remains unsolved. They will ask whether Kafka's attitude toward his material was the agonizing humorous one of the religious man who seeks salvation in spite of the contradictions that his reason reveals to him, or

[7] *Journal d'un poète*, ed. L. Ratisbonne (Paris, 1882), pp. 31-32.
[8] Brod, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123.
[9] Lessing's *Werke*, ed. C. Gross (Berlin, n. d.), XVI, 94-96.

that of the skeptic who can laugh detachedly at beliefs he does not hold and which he believes are but a product of man's tendency to torment himself with difficulties of his own creation.

Such a question is unanswerable. No one can be sure of his own neighbor's innermost beliefs, certainly not of Franz Kafka's. Each reader will look at Kafka from his own philospohical point of view. All that this essay has attempted to do is to show that both the religious and the naturalistic reader can come to an agreement on two fundamental propositions concerning *The Trial* and *The Castle*: (1) that the symbolism is, first of all, religious; (2) that the prevailing tone is humorous.

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PAUL VAN TIEGHEM (1871-1948)

FERNAND BALDENSPERGER

L'ÉQUIPE internationale des "comparatistes," en un temps si favorable à leur action, vient de perdre un de ses meilleurs initiateurs français en la personne de Paul Van Tieghem (1871-1948). Fils d'un botaniste renommé d'origine flamande et d'une mère de sang italien, il attribuait volontiers à cette double hérédité d'indéniables aptitudes linguistiques: ce ne fut pas, ainsi qu'il arrive, la philologie qui l'attira, après l'École normale et l'aggrégation des lettres, mais l'histoire littéraire, et surtout la "littérature générale." Sa thèse principale de doctorat, *Ossian en France,* mettait enfin au point un grand fait du passé européen, l'irruption d'un "Nordisme" imprévu dans les lettres et dans la mentalité moyenne d'un Occident attaché jusque-là à des modèles méditerranéens: car on ne peut dire que les toiles fameuses de David et de Girodet consacraient une manière d'acceptation dont les effets n'avaient plus qu'à s'épanouir dans tous les domaines.

En raison de ce beau travail de maîtrise, le Préromantisme sous ses divers aspects ne pouvait manquer d'occuper notre ami, et la *Revue de Littérature comparée* porte témoignage de ces prédilections. Mais Van Tieghem était loin d'être l'homme d'un seul livre. Secrétaire général de la "Commission internationale d'Histoire littéraire moderne," il donna ses soins à l'utile *Répertoire chronologique* (1935 ss.) dont il espérait continuer la publication. Sa collaboration à divers périodiques français et étrangers, la densité remarquable de son petit livre de la Collection Armand Colin sur la *Littérature comparée* (1931), enfin deux récentes tentatives de synthèse sur le *Préromantisme* et le *Romantisme* assurent à la mémoire de cet infatigable travailleur la fidélité de tous ceux qui, par tous pays, tiennent à la certitude des faits objectivement rassemblés et à une certaine prudence dans les hypothèses et les synthèses établies sur ces données.

Paris

BOOK REVIEWS

La Geste du prince Igor': Épopée russe du douzième siècle. Texte établi, traduit et commenté sous la direction d'Henri Grégoire, de Roman Jakobson et de Marc Szeftel, assistés de J. A. Joffe. New York: Columbia University Press, 1948 383 p.

A journal of comparative literature is a most fitting place for a review of a work on the *Slovo* in general, and of this work in particular, which is "une œuvre collective due à la coopération étroite et fertile d'une équipe de chercheurs d'origine nationale et scientifique diverse" (p. 361). Outstanding linguists and two foremost historians have here pooled their knowledge to create the most comprehensive study of the Russian epic yet to appear. A second volume in English, is to follow shortly, which will contain additional material of very special interest to students of comparative languages and literature, particularly articles by K. Menges, M. Schlauch, and C. A. Manning, which will deal with the *Slovo's* indebtedness to the Oriental, the Scandinavian, and ancient cultures, respectively.

The epic poem of Prince Igor' is among the greatest achievements of the Kievan period of Russian culture, a period which rose to its truly astounding height not only through its enormous creative energy and originality but also through its eagerness to absorb and its ability to fuse into an organic unity the richest and most diverse cultural importations from beyond its borders. G. Vernadsky explicitly attributes Kiev's singular greatness to this ability: "Son éclat et sa diversité s'expliquent en partie par la diversité des influences culturelles internationales. Influence de Byzance surtout, à cause des liens ecclésiastiques, littéraires et commerciaux; influence de l'Europe centrale, septentrionale et occidentale à cause des relations commerciales; influence de l'Orient—chrétien et islamique—à cause des affinités artistiques et des rapports commerciaux" (p. 218).

The *Slovo* faithfully mirrors the character of the culture from which it sprang. It is a thoroughly original creation. At the same time, a careful examination reveals in it a great volume of cultural borrowing. In fact, its ultimate significance cannot be appreciated, the central question of its authenticity cannot be solved, except from the vantage point of the science of comparative linguistics and literature. Moreover, the *Slovo* has become a thoroughly international cultural treasure by way of numerous translations: "Les traductions du *Slovo* en langues étrangères ont une longue tradition; vers 1812, date de la perte du manuscrit de la Geste, elle se trouvait déjà traduite trois fois en allemand [1] et deux fois en tchèque. Plusieurs traductions polonaises (depuis 1821)[2] et françaises (depuis 1823) n'ont pas tardé à suivre. Aujourd'hui, l'on peut lire le *Slovo* dans plus d'une vingtaine de langues" (p. 28). The volume under review contains three of the best of these translations: into French by Henri Grégoire, into Polish by Julian Tuwim, and into English by the late Samuel Cross of Harvard University, who, in his all too brief career, did so much to develop Slavic studies in the United States.

Quite as longstanding and impressive a tradition is that of rendering the *Slovo*

[1] The reviewer is preparing a study of the *Igor'* epic in German translation, with special attention to Rainer Maria Rilke's German rendering of the work.

[2] Or, more exactly, since 1806 (the free translation by the gifted Polish poet, Godecki).

into modern Russian. In this respect, too, the present volume makes a very significant contribution with Roman Jakobson's version. Having compared Jakobson's rendering with eleven other versions, six of the nineteenth century (those of V. Zhukoskii, A. Maikov, N. Pavlov, D. Minaev, L. Mei, and N. Gerbel') and five by Soviet writers (by G. Shtorm, S. Shervinskii, M. Tarlovskii, I. Novikov, and S. Basov-Verhoiantsev), the reviewer finds that it not only excels in point of philological accuracy, but is aesthetically the most satisfying as well. Executed with great energy and imagination, it remains at all times most faithful to the letter and the spirit of the original. This makes of it, to be sure, a somewhat forbidding version compared to the more limpid and ingratiating ones of Mei or Gerbel'; it requires, unquestionably, a greater experience and maturity to grasp its austere beauty. Yet it is this version and it alone which—once appreciated—affords the reader intimate acquaintance with the genuine tone of the ancient folk epic, with its characteristic "laconic precision in details" and its strikingly vivid metaphors.

Jakobson's modern version rests on the solid foundation of an excellent critical edition (pp. 39-78) and an equally expert reconstruction of the original text of the *Slovo* (pp. 150-178). Both efforts represent decisive steps forward on a path which has proven particularly treacherous, obstructed as it is by countless persistent errors, innumerable "gratuitous corrections and outdated conjectures" (pp. 23-24).

The present volume has obviously a central theme and a primary purpose. It aims to refute the contention of the French Slavist, André Mazon, that the *Slovo* is but "a curious episode in the Russian literature of the eighteenth century" (p. 235); it seeks to establish with finality the authenticity of the *Igor'* as a literary masterpiece created by "a contemporary of Igor's ill-fated campaign of 1185" (p. 235). The very subtitle "Épopée Russe du douzième siècle," signalizes the central theme. Jakobson's text-critical "remarks" (pp. 5-37) set the polemic tone: "Malheureusement, Mazon n'a étudié ni la littérature de la question, ni la matière elle-même (fn. p. 8). L'affirmation de Mazon 1944,[3] suivant laquelle 'ce Chronographe n'était pas antérieur à la fin du XVII[e] siècle, sinon même au début du XVIII[e],' se base sur deux prémisses fausses: . . ." (p. 18; examples could be multiplied).

Jakobson is ably seconded by Marc Szeftel, professor of Russian history at Cornell University, in his "Commentaire Historique" (pp. 97-149), a most exhaustive and competent compilation of relevant historical material in which the author categorically declares: "que les limites chronologiques de la composition du poème sont la date du 25 septembre 1187, d'une part, et, de l'autre part, la fin du mois d'octobre de la même année" (p. 148).

G. Vernadsky then makes his weighty contribution in his essay "La Geste d'Igor' au point de vue historique" (pp. 217-234); here the eminent Yale historian places the *Slovo* most convincingly in the cultural, social, economic, and political setting of the twelfth century and concludes: "En somme, le cadre historique du *Slovo*, malgré les doutes de M. Mazon, est d'une parfaite authenticité et correspond entièrement à la réalité historique (p. 230). En somme, l'authenticité du *Slovo* peut être corroborée par l'analyse historique, géographique et archéologique du poème. Une contrefaçon serait, d'ailleurs, une impossibilité . . ." (p. 234).

Yet the most spirited and elaborate attack on Mazon's position is executed by

[3] The reference is to Mazon's contribution on the *Slovo* in the *Revue des Etudes slaves*. XXI (1944), 5-45. Cf. also the bibliographical section in the volume under review, p. 368.

Roman Jakobson in the central contribution of the entire volume, in his proof of the "Authenticité du *Slovo*" (pp. 235-360). Nowhere does the author deal in generalities but always contributes the most trenchant analysis of concrete details. His arguments are developed in a brilliant manner, not without frequent ironic thrusts, which, however, are all fully deserved. The exposition and analysis of the most varied problems attest throughout to a sovereign mastery of the specific topic and an embracing, penetrating knowledge of comparative linguistics and literature. In fact, the monograph of the Columbia Slavist is a most impressive example of comparative methods at their best; at the same time, it exposes effectively the many pitfalls in the comparative field which are the sure undoing of the inept, the ill-equipped, and the incautious. In this respect one of the most instructive portions of Jakobson's treatise is the subchapter entitled "Le *Slovo* et le répertoire poétique du XVIII[e] siècle" (pp. 272-290); here Mazon's theory of pseudoclassical (Lomonosov, Derzhavin) and romantic (Macpherson) influences on the *Slovo* is proven to be completely untenable.

The following subchapter of Jakobson's treatise: "Le *Slovo* et l'héritage byzantin" (pp. 290-307) is, undoubtedly, the most original contribution of the entire volume. In this chapter Jakobson succeeds brilliantly in linking the *Slovo* to Greek chronicles and to eschatological literature, both popular genres at the time of *Igor's* composition, and is thus able to define the introduction to the *Slovo* as "une paraphrase du préambule à l'histoire de la guerre troyenne dans la Chronique de Manassès" (pp. 291-292) as well as to explain most convincingly several puzzling references in the text of the *Slovo*[4] (pp. 294f). It is safe to predict that Jakobson's main theses will survive the debates they are sure to arouse.

There follows (pp. 311-345) what is surely the most effective single stroke against Mazon's central thesis, "que la *Zadonščina*, loin d'avoir puisé dans le *Slovo*, lui a, au contraire, servi de source principale" (p. 314). Especially effective is Jakobson's argument demonstrating that passages common to both the *Zadonščina* and the *Slovo* "are quite in their place in the *Slovo*" but that they are "inconsistent or completely meaningless in the context of the *Zadonščina*," thus proving his point against Mazon that it is precisely the *Slovo* which served as a model and inspiration for the *Zadonščina* (p. 322).

The last two chapters of Jakobson's essay on folklore and mythology in the *Slovo*, might well have been economically integrated into the preceding ones. They are quite disproportionately short and include some repetitions. Their present treatment as entities in their own right was probably dictated by the central function of the entire work as a refutation of Mazon. As units in that attack they certainly deliver the *coup-de-grâce*. In fact, Mazon's defeat is so complete, his position at every point is proven so unsound, that the reader naturally asks himself whether so heavy an attack was really called for against so weak a foe. However, if one takes into account Mazon's considerable influence as a Slavist, his success in enlisting on his side such able Slavists as Boris Unbegaun and the late Michel Gorlin, if one further considers that Mazon did not hesitate to rouse from the dead the ghosts "des sceptiques des années trente," and, finally, if one remembers how propitious our times have proven for the flourishing of utter and dangerous anachronisms in an atmosphere of all too tolerant and tactful forbearance—if one realizes and remembers all this, then one will certainly agree that the most energetic, swift, and thorough refutation

[4] The references are to: Boyan le Devin, petit-fils de Veles (*Slovo*, line 17); petit-fils de Daz'bog (*Slovo*, lines 64 and 76); the seventh millenium (*Slovo*, line 152).

of Mazon's "theories" was indeed in order. If the spread of misconceived and obsolete notions can at all be arrested in our day and age, it is sure to be stopped, with reference at least to the cherished cultural heritage of the *Igor'*, by this sound and brilliantly executed defense of the authenticity and greatness of the *Slovo*.

André von Gronicka

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Linguistics and Literary History. Essays in Stylistics. By Leo Spitzer. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948. viii, 236 p.

This volume contains an introduction explaining the author's method, and four studies on the style of Cervantes, Racine, Diderot, and Claudel. The first essay, after recording how this method developed out of the positivistic trends among which the author grew up, describes it as a "to-and-fro movement": an observation of a stylistic particularity of the writer concerned is felt as characteristic, and is tentatively interpreted as to its implications of meaning; this is the first intuitive movement from the periphery to the center. There follows a retrograde movement from the center to the periphery, this time an analytical one, in order to verify if other observations of style and content confirm and enlarge the first intuition. Several examples are discussed; and an amusing self-criticism is indirectly introduced by the quotation of a very intelligent letter from a former student who, although obviously full of admiration for his master's achievements, describes the whole procedure as highly personal and intuitive.

The essay on Cervantes starts from the "polyonomasy" and "polyetymology" of the names given to the most prominent characters of *Don Quijote*. Each of them has several names and designations, and several etymologies or explanations are given in the course of the novel. Out of this observation, Spitzer builds up the structure of Cervantes' perspectivism; he supports his view by many other observations on style and content. We are brought to understand Cervantes' presentation of many aspects and layers of reality, his position as a Godlike artist who, nevertheless, is unreservedly obedient to and in harmony with God's world order.

The third chapter begins with a new explanation of the function of Théramène's long *récit* in the fifth act of *Phèdre*. By an accurate and very sagacious interpretation and combination of motives (the part played by the gods, by the "monstre" concept, by Théramène), the author proves that Thésée has a much greater importance in the economy of the play than most critics have hitherto attributed to him. He is the surviving hero, the student of a dire philosophy resulting from the hatred or the fatal favor of the gods, revealing a destruction of the moral world order. The *récit* is, therefore, to be considered as directed to Thésée, not immediately to the audience; it is the most important, the most pregnant and impressive moment of the gradual revelation of the truth to Thésée; it throws him into utter desperation. Thus, as Spitzer puts it, "Racine's *main* purpose was to show the collapse of world order as revealed to Thésée."

There is no doubt that Racine has furnished all the motives for such an interpretation; but these motives are not leading; they very often are drowned out by others; the reader's or listener's attention is, most of the time, not focused on Thésée. Nevertheless, the interpretation is very stimulating by its deep penetration into the network of themes contained in Racine's tragedy. The stylistic devices analyzed in this connection (Racine's preoccupation with the act of seeing, his use of intellectual, "distantiating" forms of speech, and the remnants of *pré-*

ciosité in his images) are aimed at stressing two important features: the classical discipline of emotion on the one side, and the clash of polarities, the "baroque" character as opposed to classical harmony, on the other.

The fourth chapter, analysing several passages of Diderot, stresses the emotional self-potentiation of his style, based upon a physiological, nervous, and even sexual sensation. This bodily dynamism produces an "innervation of language," of which several forms are examined. Diderot's style of utmost mobility is presented as "the close adherence of his language to his thought, by way of a sort of inborn mimicry;" it is "an irruption of the *physiological* rhythm of speech into writing," leading to an autonomy of expressivity, of almost automatic emotion. It seems to me that Spitzer has expressed the basic principle of Diderot's style, and also of his personality; this has certainly been vaguely felt by many readers, but has never before been formulated by any critic.

The last essay, dealing with the first stanza of Claudel's ode "La Muse qui est la Grâce" *(Cinq grandes Odes)* begins with an interpretation of the poet's use of the word *grand*; it then proceeds to an analysis of the rhythm ("flood-and-wave technique"), and develops, by a skillful interweaving of style patterns and content motives, a synthesis of the stanza as "the panorama of a pan-Christian harmony of reason and belief."

Although the book as a whole does not belong to comparative literature, it offers much comparative material, since, with its analysis of style patterns and motives, it continuously offers references to and comparisons with other authors; it is a European book, and the whole of Western civilization forms its background. Moreover, the method of interpretation, based upon linguistic observations, starting with a few short texts, in order to penetrate into the whole essence of a poet and his time, may prove very fertile in comparative studies as well as in other critical research of literature. Among the few men who actually use the method with several variants, Professor Spitzer is almost the only one who was originally not a student of literature, but of linguistics; he is one of the outstanding modern scholars in this field; his great linguistic experience, combined with an extreme sensitivity to the shades and tinges of poetic expression, has enabled him to create a technique incomparable for sagacity and refinement. His earlier German volumes of stylistic studies have long enjoyed a very high reputation.

It is true that even Spitzer does not escape the dangers of the method which, at the same time, are those of his temperament, more spontaneous and creative than self-critical. These dangers are overinterpretation, propensity to speculative combinations, and indiscriminate use of general terms. I may quote a few examples. Many readers will not follow him when he interprets the adjective *importune (Phèdre,* v. 159: Quelle importune main . . . A pris soin sur mon front d'assembler mes cheveux?) as implying an intellectual judgment. After analyzing Rabelais' attitude as somewhere between reality and irreality, he declares that Lanson's statement concerning Rabelais' pure, powerful, and triumphant realism is "simply wrong." But it is obvious that by the word "realism" Lanson meant the powerful expression of the biological and animal functions (and therefore was right)—whereas Spitzer means "limitation to the description of every day reality."

But it would be a great mistake not to study the method because of the imperfections of those who use it; or because, on the contrary, it requires so high a level of knowledge and so large an horizon that it is not adaptable to practical teaching or even to average research work. I have had excellent results in using it on a very modest level, in Germany as well as in Turkey. Our students learn too much biographical and other textbook material; they are like people who listen to lectures on fruits, but almost never get hold of an apple or grape. A

course in any national literature or in comparative literature might start for each author from a carefully chosen short text; the advanced students should be given the opportunity of finding for themselves the main characteristics; a small amount of guidance would be sufficient to focus their attention on the important points. For such teaching Spitzer's book can serve as an excellent introduction, although practice would have to be much simpler and less personal.

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LES ORIGINES ET LA FORMATION DE LA LITTÉRATURE COURTOISE EN OCCIDENT (500-1200). Première partie. LA TRADITION IMPÉRIALE DE LA FIN DE L'ANTIQUITÉ AU XIe SIÈCLE. By Reto R. Bezzola. [Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études: Sciences historiques et philologiques, fasc. 286.] Paris: Librarie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1944. xxii, 396 p.

How did the educated lay circles of the High Middle Ages, particularly the court circles, contribute to the rise of that courtly literature in Europe which is always to be found at the beginning of our modern profane literatures and at the bottom of our poetic conception of womanhood and of our ideal of "gentleman"? This is the question (p. ix) which Professor Reto R. Bezzola proposes to answer in a comprehensive work, the first, merely preparatory, volume of which was published during the war.

The author does not intend to trace the development of the formal patterns of courtly poetry and their sources, which scholars have tried to discover in Arab, Persian, and even Germanic environments (p. xix). He asks: How and to what extent has the very existence of an educated lay and court society contributed to the ascent of that new poetry, the ideals of which have been formative for Europe from the twelfth century until yesterday? And how did that ideal become articulate? The author thus raises a pre-eminently sociological question which is also one of "historical anthropology": a new type of man rises, at once *penseur et homme d'action*, the product of a blending of "cleric" and "knight." From this merger of clerical *vita contemplativa* and lay *vita activa*, which became so obvious in the twelfth century, there ultimately proceeded not only the mediaeval ideal of court society but also the ideal of the Renaissance "Cortegiano" and of Michelangelo's Medici tombs, of the *honnête homme* and of the "gentleman" of modern times. And a similar blending, that of the sensual and the spiritual, has produced the ideal of "lady," which, inseparable from "gentleman," has been generally dominant, until this ideal too, owing to the most recent changes of social conditions and stratifications, proved to be doomed.

The immensity of his subject, which attacks one of the most complex problems of European cultural history, has been clearly recognized by Professor Bezzola. He does not try to evade difficulties by means of simplification. In his clever and clear introduction, which the historian will read with great profit, he emphasizes the large number of antagonistic and contradictory forces demanding consideration. Far from trying to construct a linear progressive development, the author discloses rather the dialectical process by which the given potentialities were actualized at various times and in various regions: "Cleric" and "knight" appear to have exchanged their roles not too rarely. Bezzola visualizes, of course, that tension between universalistic and "national" concepts which continuously gains volume; but he wisely refrains from the customary overstress of the national aspects of his problem. On the contrary, he gives full credit to the unity of the

Greco-Roman world civilization as well as to the ideologic importance of the *Urbs*, of Rome as *caput mundi*, "whose place neither Paris, Berlin, London, Moscow, New York nor Tokyo will ever succeed in taking over" (p. xii). The values which Rome stands for become important to Bezzola in connection with the three renaissances preceding the Italian Renaissance; the Carolingian, the Ottonian, and the Franco-English renaissance of the twelfth century. He holds that from the ninth to the eighteenth century European literature became "courtly" only in connection with antiquity. The antique tradition is sought, very correctly, not only in the domains of literature and arts. "Does not the very ideal of 'Prince' always go back, directly or indirectly, to the mirage of the imperial court of Rome?" (P. xvii.) Bezzola finds a still-living antiquity in the antique ideal of the *vita contemplativa*, which by transference survived in the Church and which would naturally revert again, when secularized and declericalized, to the philosopher's attitude of the pre-Christian past. On another occasion, the author brings into focus the tension between, and synthesis of, Romanic and Germanic cultures. "We are all the more interested in this theme because it is the synthesis of those various elements—antique and barbarian, Romanic and Germanic, clerical and martial—which will give birth to courtly society" (pp. 283ff.). The sculptures of Reims—a Christian knight between a Roman legionary and a priest with host and chalice—strikingly illustrate this tension and justify the author's line of interest (see, e. g., L. Olschki, *Die romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, fig. 42, p. 80).

With this variety of conflicting forces and problems in mind, Bezzola approaches his subject in an unusual and unexpected fashion. He has drafted and spread out before the reader what he himself has called an "inventory" (p. x) of all poetical and literary utterances connected with princes and related to courts, starting from the fifth century, when the imperial tradition forfeits its political reality in the West, to the end of the eleventh century, when the style or image of a secular *humanitas* begins to take shape. In six lucidly arranged chapters of increasing length, the author unfolds his stimulating, surprisingly rich, and sufficiently documented material in such a manner that the reader always keeps track of the leading ideas without ever feeling smothered by the overflow of detail. He begins with the "Courts of the Germanic Kings in the Fifth Century" (Burgundians, Visigoths in Septimania, and Vandals in Africa) where the late Roman panegyric pattern still dominates. This continuity is manifest also at "The Court of Theodoric the Great at Ravenna," the theme of the second chapter. On Ausonian soil, however, the customary Byzantine style is fused with Germanic elements, while at the same time Vivarium and Montecassino herald very distinctly a different ideal which implies a break with the imperial tradition. The third chapter is concerned with "The Lombard, Visigothic, and Anglo-Saxon Courts," offering three different aspects of the problem. The Lombards emulate Byzantium. In Visigothic Spain it is the high clergy that holds the key position of literary activity, and, since the high clergy is at the same time "court clergy," the products of a poetizing king such as King Sisebut would fall in with this social group (see for Sisebut's poems the remarks of W. Stach, in *Corona Quernea. Festgabe Karl Strecker*, 1941, pp. 74-96). The diffusion of those royal poems to the British Isles (Aldhelm, Clement the Irishman) is an interesting item in view of the Hispano-English relations in that period (E. Bishop, *Liturgica Historica*, 1918, pp. 165-210). Anglo-Saxon England herself had developed at that early stage a rich intellectual life (far richer than intimated by Bezzola, pp. 35-40, or in the 24 lines[!] devoted to the Anglo-Saxon eighth century on p. 225), which was in every respect bifocal: it centered in the monasteries as well as at the courts, it was clerical as well as secular, and it employed the Latin language as well as the vernacular.

The three following chapters ("Merovingian Gaul," "The Carolingians," and "The Intellectual Heritage of the Carolingians") are far too bulky (pp. 41-323) to permit a brief analysis here. The Merovingian chapter (pp. 41-85) is neatly grouped around Venantius Fortunatus. Bezzola finds a good many features of the later court atmosphere foreshadowed, and even anticipated, in the works of this "last Latin poet of the Gauls" and his circle, "une aspiration vers un idéal de la personnalité qui annonce la 'courtoisie' des XII^{e} et XIII^{e} siècles, tout en continuant l'*humanitas* et la *civilitas* antiques" (p. 53). We encounter the praise of *dulcedo*, of that sentimental strand of late Latinity which will be stressed again so powerfully and consistently at the very end of the Middle Ages, in the *dolce stil nuovo* and in the work of Petrarch. "Sainte Radegonde et le nouvel idéal de la femme" is the starting point of the poetic cult of the lady who is both queen and saint. The poet moves here in an intermediary realm, half secular and half religious, which in many respects seems to adumbrate the later court climate. The "Fortunatus theme" will be repeated quite frequently in the partiture of mediaeval poetry, and Bezzola refers to it in various passages of his book, especially in connection with Sedulius and his praise of Carolingian ladies (pp. 174ff.), and in connection with the *domina* ideal of the Ottonian *Vita Mathildis* (p. 254). To what extent the courtly veneration of the lady has been affected by the model of St. Mary, and in its turn has affected the cult of the Virgin, has not yet been demonstrated by Bezzola, who just touches upon the problem when discussing Fortunatus' *De Virginitate*.

From the court of Charlemagne (chap. V) this mysticism has disappeared. This court is Frankish, clerical, and, emulous of the Caesars, protects letters and science. The ideal of Charlemagne as the "pious warrior" was portrayed by Einhard, and this portrait became important with regard to the *chansons de geste*, whereas Einhard's description of Charlemagne's court proper is very different from the later legendary and fantastic elaborations. In Charlemagne's surroundings, Bezzola believes he notices "the sprouting forth of that combat between knight and cleric" which is so significant of the later period. I am not so sure whether this terminology is applicable to the climate of Charles' Aix-la-Chapelle, and I would refrain from calling that combat "dans une certaine mesure, une lutte entre le principe d'universalité et le principe national" (pp. 103ff.). The terms are misleading. One should not forget that the tribal Frankish idea of Charlemagne's David-kingship was likewise universalistic, and that a "national" strand was certainly not foreign to City-Roman feelings as manifested by the papacy which imposed upon Charles the imperial diadem. Rome, however, though she may have been "national," was certainly not "tribal," and therefore one had better replace "national (= Frankish) by "tribal," and "universalistic" (= Roman) by "imperial." Also one should avoid styling (p. 103) the Carolingian renaissance in any respect the renewal of "classic culture" and should replace "classic" by "late antique," since the whole Carolingian ideal of style was that of the Christian emperors, of Constantine or Theodosius, as has been pointed out excellently by Krautheimer (*Art Bulletin*, XXIV, 1942) and by E. R. Curtius (*Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, LVIII, 1938, a series of profound studies which Professor Bezzola unfortunately has failed to evaluate.)

A new literary genre is represented by the "Mirrors of Princes." It begins to develop in the Carolingian period and will finally drift toward the maxim *rex illiteratus quasi asinus coronatus* (p. 110). Under Louis the Pious, the palace at Aix-la-Chapelle gradually loses ground—"il sera finalement remplacé par le palais comtal, par le palais épiscopal, par le château du seigneur" (p. 145). The literature of the ninth century, the Empress Judith and Walafrid Strabo, the poverty of

literary activity under the Eastern Carolingians, the stupendous harvest of Charles the Bald's patronage of arts and letters—all these topics are ably discussed. Perhaps the growing importance of monachism, though mentioned (pp. 208, 212f.), should have been stressed more strongly in that period, for it changed the whole aspect and strongly influenced the general climate (C. Erdmann, in *Deutsches Archiv*, VI, 1943, was probably not yet accessible to Professor Bezzola) of the Ottonian and Salian period, the subject of the sixth chapter, in which also the early Capetians and the rise of the spirit of the *chansons de geste* are treated.

It goes without saying that the close inspection of so vast and interesting a material has led the author to the discovery of many cross- and interrelations which do not fail to unlock for his readers many new aspects of well-known things. It is also needless to say that the present volume raises many questions which only the second volume can answer. Nevertheless the reader is entitled to ask the question which continuously thrusts itself upon him: Does the material, which Professor Bezzola has collected with so much love and care, promise to elucidate the "origins and the formation of courtly literature"? Does a, so to speak, statistical method unravel a problem of life? This does not imply a rejection of the method, but a certain skepticism concerning its ends. It is true, we now have an inventory of literature referring to courts and princes; but does that, all by itself, answer the questions raised by the author? Moreover, the inventory, like all statistics, contains errors of its own, and it appears sometimes strangely irrelevant to the main subject.

What, for instance, has the traditional mention of the king's name in the litanies (p. 195, n. 3) to do with courtly literature? And if it has a bearing, why then has this material not been assembled as completely as possible? The same is true with regard to the *Laudes* (p. 189). Even the versicles for the emperor which are tacked to poems *In Assumptione Sanctae Mariae*, interesting though they are, do not lead to the understanding of the formation of *courtly* literature, but to the problem of the ruler in *liturgical* poetry. If this genre be considered relevant to the main subject, Professor Bezzola should have included, for instance, the hymns for the anniversaries of the king in the *Breviarium Gothicum* (*P. L.*, 86, 917f.; *Anal. Hymn.*, 27, 269) or the metrical orations *Pro rege* of Eugenius of Toledo and Fulbert of Chartres and of many others as well (*Anal. Hymn.*, 50, 263, 275). In that case it would be justified to include also the *susceptacula regum* (see W. Bulst, in *Corona Quernea*, pp. 97ff.), that is, the liturgical chants for the reception of kings, which Bezzola adduces so frequently without quite recognizing the literary genre (e.g., pp. 151, 162, 164, 170, 189, 192, 195, 197, 208, etc.). In all those cases, in quest of clerical activity with regard to courts, he seems to have mistaken liturgical poetry for clerical poetry which is not quite the same thing even though clerics may have been the poets; or, if it is relevant, he should have combed through liturgical poetry more thoroughly. Here there is some inconsistency in the "statistics" and some confusion.

All this refers merely to the *thema probandum*, not to the value of the book. Professor Bezzola writes (p. x): "Nous osons croire que notre travail présentera comme source d'information une certaine utilité pour l'historien de la littérature médiévale." The author is too modest. His "inventory" as such, his astute analyses of the works of literature, his clear style, the excellent index (pp. 325-391), and his general skill when piloting the reader through the depths and shallows of his material, leave little, if anything, to be desired. He is always interesting, and any reader will be grateful to him for having sifted the mediaeval literature *sub specie principum* and for having broached a great number of stimulating problems.

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LE PRÉROMANTISME . . . LA DÉCOUVERTE DE SHAKESPEARE SUR LE CONTINENT. By Paul Van Tieghem. Paris: Sfelt, 1937. 412p.

"Le Préromantisme" might almost be called Van Tieghem's own domain by right of discovery, exploration, and survey. The newest volume of the series is not the last. A treatise on *Le Roman sentimental* is announced, and a comprehensive discussion of the following period has already been published: *Le Romantisme dans les littératures européennes* (Paris, 1948). The topic under discussion was associated in the minds of the preromanticists with the Ossianic songs and the idea of "true poetry." The three were grouped together by Herder in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst*. Unlike the other topics which Van Tieghem has discussed under the designation "Le Préromantisme," Shakespeare became the object of bitter strife.

It may be contended that the subject Van Tieghem has chosen has already been discussed to the point of exhaustion, but a second reflection discloses the error. There have been excellent treatments of "Shakespeare in France" and Shakespeare in Germany," but the history of Shakespeare's gradual acceptance abroad is a unified one, and the only satisfactory method of treating it is as such. Van Tieghem excludes at the outset the question of Shakespeare's influence on the works of other dramatists. He assigns himself the task of answering the question: "A quel moment, dans quelle mesure, de quelle manière Shakespeare a été révélé aux diverses nations du continent, comment il a été successivement connu, étudié, compris, apprécié, senti; dans son art dramatique, dans son contenu psychologique, dans sa valeur littéraire." The period under discussion is roughly 1680-1800, and the portion of the continent inquired into is chiefly France and Germany. It becomes evident that the other countries of Europe rarely played an independent role.

At the outset a limited number of tragedies came under discussion, chiefly those known to Voltaire: *Julius Caesar, Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet*. The comedies and the historical plays remained in the background, and the sonnets hardly became known abroad before 1800.

It was not to be expected that many additional documents relating to Shakespeare's penetration into the continent could still be dicovered. The merit of Van Tieghem's study lies in the careful analysis of the content of the known references and their arrangement in such a way that one sees the gradual development of the picture of Shakespeare as seen by continental eyes.

Van Tieghem explains the belated discovery of Shakespeare by the continent in part by referring to the limited popularity of Shakespeare in England from the closing of the theaters in 1642 until the debut of Garrick in 1741. This is a view that was formerly held in England as well, but now no more. On the critical side it was disputed by Ingleby and Smith's *A Century of Praise, Allusions to Shakespeare 1597-1693*, and on the theatrical side by Campbell, "Stage Presentation in England in the Eighteenth Century," PMLA, XXXII (1917), 163-200. Betterton, Barton Booth, and Anthony Boehme all found favor between 1700 and 1741.

From 1731 on, the continent viewed Shakespeare through the eyes of Voltaire, whose well-known remarks were echoed without skepticism for over two decades. Critics have set up the Abbé Prévost as a supplanter of Voltaire. Analysis shows that the Abbé said of Shakespeare much the same as Voltaire, the only difference being that he stressed the positive rather than the negative qualities. Van Tieghem suggests plausibly the reason: Voltaire had been consorting with Pope, Bolingbroke, and Chesterfield, while the Abbé, in the lack of such aristocratic connec-

tions, was forced to rely on the preface of Rowe and other printed criticism, intended to impress the merits of Shakespeare on the public.

The honor of disputing Voltaire successfully belongs rather to the translator La Place, with his *Discours sur le Théâtre anglais* (1745). After a nine-page analysis of this essay, Van Tieghem concludes: "Nulle attitude n'était plus nettement préromantique; la date ancienne où elle se manifeste ajoute singulièrement à son intérêt."

Turning now to the German scene, our critic traverses a field already explored by others and quotes familiar passages from Borck, Bodmer, Gottsched, Mendelssohn, and Johann Elias Schlegel. "Son influence sur Lessing est certaine; Lessing, qu'il dépassait par avance en voyant l'originalité de cet art dramatique, non dans l'action, mais dans les caractères." A peculiarity of Schlegel's *Vergleich Shakespears und Andreas Gryphs* is that it seems to owe nothing to Voltaire. Van Tieghem calls this unusual freedom to the attention of German scholars who have apparently overlooked it.

I like the explanation of Lessing's silence regarding Shakespeare. After the completion of the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, Lessing felt that the attempt to reconcile Shakespeare and Aristotle was a failure. I also like the comment: "On trouve aussi une fois chez lui (*Dramaturgie de Hambourg*, No. 34) l'idée que développera Herder: le monde créé par le poète est une image réduite du monde créé par Dieu, modifiée et arrangée par lui." On p. 111 our author says: "Dans la *Dramaturgie* . . . il [Shakespeare] n'est nommé que deux fois." This is misleading. According to the index of the Lachmann-Muncker edition, he is referred to at least fifteen times. Van Tieghem himself quotes more than two passages. In his discussion of Shakespeare as viewed by the *Aufklärung*, he sets in relief the nationalistic note. Shakespeare was hailed as a Germanic genius to the disadvantage of Corneille, Racine, and Molière.

Van Tieghem lays more stress upon Gerstenberg than on Hamann as Herder's mentor in regard to Shakespeare. He calls Gerstenberg's criticism "la plus riche, la plus neuve et la plus suggestive qu'on eût encore pu lire sur le continent, peut-être même la plus importante du siècle. . . . Il est le premier sur le continent qui mette en lumière la couleur de cette œuvre, son mélange pittoresque des tons, sa langue poétique, tout ce qui n'est pas proprement mérite dramatique . . . c'est tout cela qui devait être prôné surtout par les romantiques, dont à cet egard il se montre le précurseur." He accepts the findings of recent German investigators, chiefly Gottfried Weber, *Herder und das Drama* (1922), to the effect that Herder's "historical" method of criticism was not original with him. He had had predecessors in Henry Home, Elizabeth Montagu, and other English critics. He says (p. 174): "Le théâtre de Shakespeare . . . devint l'objet d'un culte partagé par Herder, en grande partie instauré par lui, dit L. M. Price qui conclut, de certains travaux récents, à une influence de Herder plus forte qu'on ne l'admettait précédemment; partagé aussi par les jeunes gens camarades ou commensaux de Gœthe." I find to the contrary, however, that I reported rather that the recent tendency was to minimize rather than to stress the direct influence of Herder on Gœthe and his young companions at Strassburg. (See *The Reception of English Literature in Germany*, pp. 297-301.)

Stadler and Gundolf have already discussed Wieland's translation of Shakespeare and the disparity between his critical notes and his personal opinions. It remained only to fit the details of Wieland's work into the international picture. Van Tieghem's chapter on Wieland concludes with the remark: "Dans le classement chronologique qu'institue Gundolf: sujets, —forme, —contenu, —il se place nettement dans la troisième catégorie." This is interesting in view of the fact that

Gundolf himself had discussed Wieland under the heading "Shakespeare als Form."

In the course of the discussion of Lenz (p. 185) we find: "Lenz prétendait avoir écrit ses *Anmerkungen* dès 1771, avant d'avoir lu les morceaux de Herder et de Gœthe sur le même sujet; mais cette allegation a été reconnue fausse." This categorical assertion is the more remarkable in view of the fact that Th. Friedrich's edition of the *Anmerkungen* (*Probefahrten*, XIII, 1909) is listed (p. 179, note) as one of the chief authorities on the work.

Chapters IX, X, and XII deal respectively with "Premières traductions complètes," "Premières adaptations scéniques," and "Suite des adaptations," bringing the history of the translations and adaptations nearly up to the end of the century. Here we find analyses of prefaces and detailed descriptions of the translations and adaptations. One notes how often the authors of the prefaces proclaim the need of a complete and undenaturized Shakespeare, only to alter the text with omissions and softenings. This was true not only in France but also in Germany. The similarity of treatment was not due to reciprocal influence, Van Tieghem points out, but to parallelism of development. Germany was less squeamish than France on the whole; but the details of Schröder's concessions at Hamburg are fairly well known. At the hands of even the best of the German directors the tragedies of Shakespeare became middle-class dramas with "par force" happy endings.

Austria assimilated Shakespeare even later than France. Sonnenfels and Ayrenhoff were outspoken opponents. Sonnenfels said in 1768, to quote him as translated: "que personne ne court après l'esprit plus maladroitement que Shakespeare; qu'il mêle les impressions les plus opposées, faisant rire et pleurer en même temps. 'Ses pièces sont des monstres.' La vraisemblance, les convenances, les mœurs y sont blessées." Van Tieghem cites as the source of this quotation: *Lettres sur le théâtre larmoyant* (*Briefe über die weinende Schaubühne*). It is to be hoped the readers will immediately divine that the correct title is not as above but *Briefe über die wienerische Schaubühne*. The prevailing custom of French works of giving titles in French translation is perplexing to the reader and sometimes totally confusing. One remembers here a French critic who referred to Cibber's well-known comedy, "La dernière chemise de l'amour."

In this review I have referred to certain minor points of disagreement with the author. To recount all that he has said truly and well would far exceed the limits of a review. I deem this the first work one should read on the subject of the discovery of Shakespeare abroad. The special excellent works on Shakespeare in Germany and Shakespeare in France can be read to better advantage thereafter. The work is intended for French readers. Others would prefer to read the comments of English and German critics in the original language. Failing that, one might ask for volume and page references to the originals.

The text seems to be remarkably free from misprints, but the footnotes need some corrections. In the "Avant-propos," p. x, line 7, for Lavroix read Lacroix. In the note on p. 106, for Fr. W. Meisnert read F. W. Meisnert; for *J.* Witkowski read *G.* Witkowski and for Hamburgischen read Hamburgische; on p. 137, note 1, read Shakespeare; to the note on p. 142, add p. 163; on p. 156, note 1, read Vierteljahrschrift; on p. 179, note 1, for Keckels read Keckeis; on p. 232, note 2, read Hütteman and Verhältnis; on p. 301, note 1, read Bühne. One gains the impression the author did not have the opportunity of proofreading the footnotes.

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LES ÉCRIVAINS FRANÇAIS ET LE MIRAGE ALLEMAND 1800-1940. By Jean-Marie Carré. Paris: Boivin et Cie., [1947]. xvi, 223 p.

An extensive summary of Professor Carré's stimulating account of influential French interpretations of the theme "Germany" from the latter part of the eighteenth century until the invasion of Poland in 1939 is to be found in the *Revue de littérature comparée*, XXII (1948), 146-154, under "Comptes rendus critiques." The author of this account, B. Munteano, does not attempt to evaluate either the methods or the theses of the book, which, surely even for some French readers, must be controversial ones. For, as he himself points out (p. 154), five or six *thèses* covering parts of the field surveyed by Carré are now in preparation at the Sorbonne, which fact might allow one quite properly to wonder whether Carré's interpretation of an important question of French, and European, cultural history will be proved by the event to have been a brilliant intuitive synthesis—or a poor guess. (There is, of course, an alternative, which shall here be disregarded as improper academic suspicion: to wonder whether said *thèses* are themselves necessary.)

Apart from offering a lucid historical survey, well documented with direct quotations, of what French writers have thought and, especially, publicized about Germany within the period already indicated, Carré seems to have two fundamental ideas to expound: *first*, that French intellectuals have at all times tended to diffuse in France an image of German civilization to which contemporary German actuality did not (usually: no longer) conform and which was accordingly a mirage; and, *second*, that the resulting French failure to understand the true character of contemporary German civilizations has kept France from being on guard against the repeated victimizations by Germany to which the country has been subjected because it has innocently taken the mirage for the reality.

With the first point little exception can be taken, although it is hard to see why the renewed cult of German philosophy and scholarly method shortly after the Franco-Prussian War should be treated in a chapter entitled "La Résurrection des chimères," when in the preceding one Michelet's *La France devant le monde* is characterized as "une analyse d'une éternelle actualité" with "les caractères que nous connaissons tous: puissance du mécanisme, absence de psychologie, aveuglement dans les choses de l'âme, orgueil insensé, et cette sourde griserie de sa propre force que déchaine, dans toute guerre menée par l'Allemagne, une sorte d'inconsciente et primitive fureur" (p. 102). Certainly there was much that was chimerical in the picture of Germany presented by the many writers inspired, like Michelet, by the events of "l'année terrible." ("La Résurrection des chimères" is effectively counterbalanced by any survey of anti-German literature in France between 1871 and 1914, e.g., W. W. Falk, *Die Beurteilung des Vorkriegsdeutschlands: Untersucht an der französischen Hetzliteratur und der zeitgenössischen Kritik an den innerpolitischen und wirtschaftlichen Zuständen des Deutschen Reiches von 1871-1914* (Berlin, diss., *ca.* 1936), a study in which, incidentally, it is plausibly argued that throughout the whole nineteenth century favorable French opinions of Germany represented only a select minority of exceptions.)

As for the second point, it may safely be doubted if "l'orientation de notre [*i.e.*, France's] opinion publique et de notre destinée" has depended, and will depend (p. xv), on the image of Germany presented by French intellectuals: in the past, at least, the ideas of such writers have had less weight with statesmen than practical military, social, and economic considerations; and there is every reason to believe that since 1870, not necessarily the earliest *terminus a quo* that might be selected, the average Frenchman has been more conscious of the existence of a

"*Germania* casquée" (p. 186) than troubled by "Les Deux Allemagnes?" (pp. 129-146) or subscribing to "Le Mythe de Weimar" (pp. 174-187).

The writing of a book like *Les Écrivains français et le mirage allemand* must bring its author face to face with many knotty problems of methodology. Most of these Professor Carré has solved well: each of his chapters presents new facets of "Germany" as seen by successive generations of French writers; his rather complete summaries of French interpretations of "Germany" avoid overrepetition and yet are aptly illustrated with well-chosen quotations; his "bibliographie sommaire" permits ready examination of previous treatments of larger and smaller parts of the subject.

On the other hand, he often fails, it seems to me, to make clear what are the realities in whose stead so many French writers have seen mirages, with the result that the reader is left with the final impression that the more unpleasant mirages are the only reality. This might, of course, be the truth—although a mirage, it also should not be forgotten, can simply be an inverted or misplaced image; if it is a complete illusion, the fact needs to be demonstrated. For plausibility's sake, then, the various French images of Germany should have been contrasted, not with briefer impressionistic accounts of the given realities, but with as long or even longer ones of the greatest possible historical objectivity. No doubt Carré chose *en connaissance de cause* to make his sketches of the real "Germanies" as succinct as possible so that the continuity of his main theme, the history of the French interpretation of Germany, would remain uninterrupted; by so doing, however, he has weakened the convincingness of his own conclusions. For instance, that Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* reveals "une large et regrettable lacune" with respect to German romanticism, no student of German literature at the beginning of the nineteenth century will deny; but he will not agree that "une brûlante, une agressive pensée nationale anime toute cette littérature" (p. 22) is a generalization to fill this lacuna properly, and will therefore pause suspiciously, and to the detriment of his appreciation of Carré's book as a whole, at many other generalizations which may well in the last analysis be correct.

If this book has shortcomings as a work of history, it is still invaluable as an introduction to the literary-historical topic which is its author's first and announced concern. Brilliantly clear, although perhaps deceptively so, it raises questions not merely intellectually tantalizing but also of grave concern to all of us as humane human beings. For the reader of *Les Écrivains français et le mirage allemand* cannot easily forget, however dispassionate he may want to be, that it is dedicated "A la mémoire de mes étudiants morts pour la France: Albert Piat, fusillé par les Allemands en 1944; Gilles Chaine, tué dans le maquis en 1944; Michel Cabos, déporté à Mauthausen et mort en 1945."

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MIMESIS: DARGESTELLTE WIRKLICHKEIT IN DER ABENDLÄNDISCHEN LITERATUR. By Erich Auerbach. Bern: A. Francke AG. Verlag, 1946. 503 p.

This book is a series of essays, each concerned with one period of European literature, from Homer and the Old Testament to Proust, Joyce, and Virginia Woolf—and each beginning with a stylistic analysis of a short representative text. The unity of the whole book is established by one leading idea, the approach of the different authors and their periods to everyday reality.

Professor Auerbach starts from the strict distinctions between different style levels in classical and late antiquity, which made it impossible to introduce every-

day reality into works of sublime style, and confined its presentation to the comic and "humble" class of works. The author then develops, throughout later European literature, a kind of dialectic struggle between "distinctions of style levels," according to the classical pattern, and fusion of style, where everyday reality could be presented in a serious, problematical, and even tragic way. He stresses two great revolutionary irruptions of everyday reality into sublimity. The first was caused by the Gospels, the history of Christ, with its fusion (not only moral but also aesthetic) of sublimity and humility; its influence as a model pattern of approach to reality extended throughout the Middle Ages, and was still very strong during the sixteenth century. The second irruption, slowly prepared in the eighteenth, took place in modern times, resulting in an almost complete victory of style fusion, or of serious, problematical, and tragic presentation of everyday reality and common people, in an everyday language. Its first fully developed documents are Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* and Balzac's novels. The distinction between the Christian and the modern "serious realism" is established by the analysis of the "figurative" interpretation of the Bible (Auerbach's main field of research in recent years). The sway of Christian realism brought about a "vertical" approach to earthly events, so that they were taken primarily in their immediate significance within the plan of Providence; whereas the modern fusion of style produces a realism almost exclusively "horizontal," developing events in their earthly evolution and interconnection.

These theories are not exposed at the beginning of the book, nor even at the beginning of the chapters; they emerge slowly from the concrete study of texts, their style, their content, their implications, their relation to other texts; nor are the theories isolated from other aspects which the texts may present; the position which the various works and periods held in the light of Auerbach's problem is analyzed each time in a way which allows each voice to be heard in its particular sound and individual beauty. One never gets the impression that the analysis of a text is aimed at proving a theory. Only at the end of the book does Auerbach give a short theoretical résumé (pp. 495f.).

As this reviewer is not the first to call this book "great," he feels obliged to give his own reason for using the epithet. Under the leadership of men like Leo Spitzer, Amado Alonso, Giulio Bertoni, Gustave Cohen, J. E. Shaw—to give only one representative name for each of five countries—"Stilforschung" has for the past thirty years been one of the main features of European and American philology. Its double character comes from its being based at the same time on linguistics and on literary understanding. Its aim is by definition monographic and individualistic, though it has been able to cover broader fields without renouncing its basic character.[1]

But what had not yet happened was the attempt to write something like a history of literature with the means of "Stilforschung." And yet it is only in this way that history of literature may be rescued from the hybrid character which, by requiring it to amass materials and at the same time to criticize ideas, exposes it to the danger of becoming either pedantic and primitive or subjective and un-

[1] Cf. the survey by Helmut Hatzfeld: "Nuevas investigaciones estilísticas," *Boletín del Inst. de Filol. de la Univ. de Chile* (Santiago, 1946), IV, 7ff. Here there are to be found, after the sections which deal with stylistic monographs in the narrower sense, others about "el medio mismo de expresión, . . . a través de una literatura entera" (pp. 55ff.); "la investigación de [un] tema . . . con su expresión estilística" (pp. 59ff.); "la historia del estilo" (pp. 62ff.); "idiomatología" (pp. 66ff.); and the possibility of extending the study of personal styles to "estilos de país, generación, época, tribu, nación, raza, continente" (p. 74).

reliable. By presenting the essence of every literary period in one of a series of "Stilmonographien"—and not of the usual more or less arbitrary essays—each limited to its subject, but nevetheless of representative importance, one may raise literary history to the level of exact philology. And it is such an aim—a history of European literature in "Stilmonographien"—that has been attempted, and in great part realized, by Auerbach in his *Mimesis*. His book may therefore be called something like a seal on the work of a whole philological generation.[2]

However, the book does not intend to replace the handbooks of history of literature. By the very fact that it has one leading point of view, the material it gives is considerably restricted. But even so, names are omitted which are milestones in the "Geschichte des abendländischen Realismus": e.g., the *Celestina*, Thackeray (once mentioned, p. 438), and Pirandello.

As developed at the beginning of this review, three points of view are the pillars of Auerbach's conception: the separation of styles, the mixing of styles, and the irruption of the Christian Gospel into the otherwise immanent reflection of reality by literature. One may criticise the simplicity of these three points of view, and even more their unilaterally aesthetic quality. But so much is true, that by this simple general scheme the book as a whole achieves one formal quality, a transparency which is only heightened by the amazing variety of individual stylistic analyses. One is reminded of the art, at once transparent and detailed, of Moorish architecture.

This impression of clarity and grace is improved by Auerbach's own "style," and its lack of pedantry. Though full of the most varied details, this large volume contains not a single footnote. Auerbach himself says that the very lack of a philological library at Istanbul, where he wrote the book, may have helped him instead of hindering him from finishing it (p. 497f.). It is a scholarly work, but it has the attractiveness of a novel. Each chapter has a separate title—"Die Narbe des Odysseus;" "Das unterbrochene Abendessen"—referring to the first piece of text interpreted in it. But many chapters treat more than one writer—e.g., Chapter II deals with Petronius and Tacitus; Chapter XIV with La Bruyère, Molière, and Racine; Chapter XV begins with the Abbé Prevost, and then passes over Voltaire to St. Simon, who is its central "hero." And there are really great moments when Auerbach reproduces, e.g., a page of Petronius in the modern Berlin dialect (pp. 31f.), instead of translating it literally. The "spirit" of Trimalchio's party—that is to say, the aim of stylistic understanding—is revealed most unexpectedly by transposing (not translating) it into congenially vulgar surroundings, by means of a cultural leap over 1,900 years and from imperial Rome to republican Berlin. In general one can say that Auerbach's learned familiarity with 3,000 years of Western European literature has not impaired the freshness of his expression. Some epithets—"bezaubernd," "überwältigend," and, before all, "würzig"—recur too often. As the author himself has written this reviewer, he does not mean to cast doubt upon the authenticity of the Letter to Cangrande (p. 182).

An important hint, towards the end of the book, about the "Zerfaserung der äusseren Handlung" in modern novelistic art (p. 493) leads to one of the many themes which Auerbach has not treated in his volume: the question, whether material invention and unified composition have an independent and essential place in poetic creation; or if they are only essential in so far as they help a leading idea to be expressed. This reviewer intends to say more about this basic prob-

[2] In the same way, Auerbach long ago put something like a seal on the Dante philology of that time with his book *Dante als Dichter der irdischen Welt* (1929); then also his problem centered around reality.

lem. For the moment there may be cited a paper "La invención en la novela," where some indications of the problem have been made.[3]

Another fundamental theme within the horizon of Auerbach's book might have been the relation between literature and "historic" reality, the existential background of the "historical" novel and drama,[4] and, in this connection, the well-known but little-understood tendency of poets—mediaeval, humanistic, romantic—to suppose a "source" of historic reality for what is evidently their own free invention. Moreover, the problem of the "style of perspectivity" may be taken up with the help of Auerbach's categories; and one will find this style to be a way of expressing reality belonging to the epoch of idealism and disappearing with it.[5]

Thus one may see in Auerbach's beautiful book not only a seal on a philological past, but also a beacon to a philological future.

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[3] *Revista Nacional de Cultura*, nos. 38-40 (Caracas, 1943).

[4] R. Koskimies: *Theorie des Romans* (Helsinki, 1935); A. Chevalley: "Temps, histoire, roman," *Revue de littérature comparée*, VIII (1928), 205ff.

[5] In a typically modern work like Camus' *Peste* there is no "perspective" in the author's viewpoint towards the things he tells; and the book is the expression of an "existential," not an idealistic feeling.

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